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Faith War and Policy

LECTURES AND ESSAYS

Faith War and Policy

LECTURES AND ESSAYS

BY

GILBERT MURRAY

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PREFACE

TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

It is several months since the copy for this book was sent off to America, so I add a few words of preface to the English edition.

The situation in Scandinavia, especially in Stockholm, has developed to a point of such extreme interest that I have added, out of their chronological order, some papers written in the spring of 1916 on my return from Sweden. On the other hand I have not inserted here two small pieces which I have published since the copy for America was sent out: "The Way Forward, Three Papers on Liberal Policy with a Preface by Lord Grey of Fallodon," and an Introduction to Mrs. Hobhouse's pamphlet "I Appeal unto Caesar," on the treatment of the Conscientious Objectors. Both pamphlets are published by Messrs. Allen & Unwin, price 1*s*.

In international politics the influence of America, supported by that of the Russian Revolution, continues to increase. I am not speaking of the military change, as to which there is much to say, but the change in the political atmosphere. This war, like most other great ordeals, has two aspects in which it may be regarded. It has, so to speak, both a spirit

and a body. In spirit it is a martyrdom for a high cause, a crusade for human liberty, a War against War; and the prize it wins, if successful, will be the establishment of Public Right between nations and the stamping out of War from the civilized world. In the body it is a fight, and a desperately hard and absorbing fight; it has been described by such phrases as "a duel between England and Germany" or "the inevitable clash between the two groups into which Europe is divided"; and the prize it would normally win would be a vast increase of territory and wealth and military power to the victor. The principle in the first case is Justice, in the second Covetousness; not of course any base personal Covetousness, but that national form of the passion which is the more dangerous because it is so easily idealized.

The forces behind the principle of National Covetousness are permanent and strong. In every country the "mob," whether rich or poor, is "jingo"; that is, according to its own poor mobbish lights, patriotic. It dislikes foreigners, it cannot bear self-criticism, it loves conquests, it enjoys fights in which "our chap beats the other chap." Also a large part of the educated upper class is in the cruder sense Imperialist; that is, it considers that the greatness and success of any nation is best measured by the number of other nations it conquers and governs. All unthinking and unregenerate man is on this side, except those classes to whom personal suffering has, with no effort of their own, brought wisdom or that depth of human sympathy which is akin to wisdom.

On the other side there are two main forces: first, the wiser statesmen and men of conscience. As regards Great Britain, most of these probably belong to the left wing of the Liberal Party, but many of them are Moderates or Conservatives, and a surprising number, just at this moment, members of the House of Lords. A similar element seems to be represented in Germany by men like Foerster and Erzberger, or even by the better side of Bethmann-Hollweg before he surrendered to the militarists. They are reinforced in every European country by a great and growing mass of the Socialist or semi-Socialist working class.

Now in England Socialist feeling stands very much where it did before the war. It has gained some important experience; but it has not been militarized, for the most part, nor yet infuriated. It is true to its old ideals as a Labour Party, but true also to its ideals as a union of sensible un-visionary Englishmen. The Memorandum on War Aims, passed by the Special Conference of the Labour Movement on December 8, 1917, ranks in my opinion among the finest pronouncements of the war, a monument of balanced common sense and idealism. That is because, owing to our command of the sea, we have not yet suffered as the other nations of Europe have suffered. Among them it is very different. We can most of us form no conception of the extreme and desolating misery which the war has brought, and is still bringing, to the bulk of the population, both workers and bourgeois, in many parts of Europe. And that misery must bear its fruit. In Russia it is already ripe, a new fruit

with a new name. It is Bolshevism. I do not mean by this the particular policies or actions of the present Russian Government, but the vast surge of popular feeling which has flung that Government up into power; the determination of vast masses of men, with unorganized instinctive unanimity, that they have been tormented long enough; have been beaten, killed, robbed, starved, frozen, and treated as dirt long enough; and that henceforth they will disregard all orders and, individually and collectively, on the spot, take what food they can get and kill any one who does not leave them alone. Meantime the same seed is ripening in Poland, in Galicia, in Serbia and Rumania, here and there in western Austria, and even, so it is said, across the frontiers of Germany. Germany is a well-disciplined nation, its people obedient and patriotic, its Government strong and ruthless. A revolution in Germany is not a thing to be lightly expected, though if it occurred it would probably be the most orderly and effective revolution known to history. But after all their Government is both internationally wicked and reactionary at home to a degree that no other civilized nation would tolerate. The Socialists—most of whom would probably agree with that last sentence—were before the war actually a majority of the working class. There have been since the war much extra oppression, a good deal of starvation and misery, a great and needlessly great death-rate among the children of the poor. If I were a German Socialist the only thing that would keep me back from revolution would be the belief that, bad

as my own Government was for me and for Germany, a victory by the Entente would be still worse. I would read again those extracts from *The Times* and the *Morning Post* and the speeches of English and French Chauvinists with which my thoughtful Wilhelmstrasse has kept me supplied, and reflect that, much as I loathe the Kaiser and Hindenburg and Tirpitz and all the Prussian gold-helmets—if that is the proper equivalent for "brass hats"—at least they do not actually wish to destroy Germany, and their enemies do. If I were a German Socialist I should stick fast to the Kaiser and the worst Government he chose to give me, unless . . . unless, by any chance, I could be convinced that the people in power in France and England and America really did want a fair and democratic peace and not a peace based on the ruin of my country. If that were really true, and if I could really be convinced of it . . . well, then I would move heaven and earth to get a Government in my own country which honestly represented the will of the people and desired the good of the people and was not made up of helmets and machine-guns and lies.

. . . . . .

I suppose most people in England feel that it is impossible, or almost impossible, to conduct peace negotiations with any German Government so long as the parliamentary power is subject to the military. We should know all through the negotiations that their aims were fundamentally hostile to ours and that at every point they were trying to deceive us. Now I do not wish for a moment to draw any general

parallels between their Government and ours; because in my judgement the German Government is a group of detected criminals and ours is nothing of the kind. It is, at worst, a bevy of very imperfect policemen. But on this particular point we shall find, if we inquire, that the Germans feel just the same difficulty about the French and English Governments, at least in certain of their moods. "It is not possible to negotiate with such people," exclaims Count Hertling, and there is no particular reason to doubt his sincerity.

The fact is that the War-mood is one thing and the Settlement-mood another, and it is the War-mood that has from time to time shaped the dominant attitude of mind in the governments of all the belligerent countries, as well as in the "mob" and the Press. Only the clearest heads and strongest characters have maintained their full sanity. Now I have no sympathy with the War-mood myself. But I always think there is one thing to be said in its favour: that it dies, and dies rather soon. "I cannot breathe," exclaimed a famous eighteenth-century Admiral, "while a single Frenchman remains alive!" And no doubt he was loved and respected at the time for his difficulty in breathing, just as—given the change of "German" instead of "Frenchman"—he would be loved and respected by wide circles now. But of course he did breathe with perfect ease while Frenchmen in millions lived and flourished, and as a matter of fact he is known to have done acts of kindness to French people in distress.

At the time when I delivered the last address in

this volume it required all the faith in human nature that I could muster to believe that the heart of this nation was really sound. I am very thankful that I had that faith. Few Liberals then could have hoped that in little more than a year we should have an authoritative statement of British War Aims such as that made by Mr. Lloyd George on January 5, 1918, after consultation with Mr. Asquith and Lord Grey; much less that both this and the still finer statement made by President Wilson a few days later would be accepted almost without a murmur by the London press. Paris Resolutions, "War after the War"—that phrase that might have been coined in Hell itself—punitive tariffs, the crushing of Germany, annexations, war-indemnities, new naval stations, and the whole imperialist farrago seem to have disappeared into the bog of No-man's Land. If they recur it will be not because we seek them, but because we are baffled in our true aims. Instead of them we have the League of Nations, Disarmament, and Government only by consent of the governed. This change of spirit is a very wonderful phenomenon, due perhaps chiefly to the influence of those two forces mentioned above—the calm wisdom of certain great leaders, most of them out of office, and the essential sense of justice and the pity for suffering humanity which are strong in the rank and file of labouring men.

. . . . . .

Three main types of Peace seem to me possible in the future, with many variations of course in each type—an imperialist peace, a reasoned peace, and a Bolshevik cataclysm.

First, if the German Government remains fixed and the Entente Governments fall back from their present War Aims to the worst moods of last year, the Peace will come by a process of haggling between the various large interests concerned, and the balance of gain and loss will be decided simply by the war-map and the ingenuity of the bargainers. Each party's gain will be the other's loss, and he who gets the worst of it now will hope, and work, for better luck next time. The stronger Powers will come out stronger still, while the smaller and weaker nations go to the wall, and "Principles" or "ideals" are nowhere. Thus a policy of Peace by Conquest would probably end in a Peace by Betrayal.

Secondly, there may be an anti-militarist Government in Germany and a Government in England, France, and Italy which is true both in word and deed to the War Aims now officially announced by President Wilson, or to some modification of them in the direction desired by Labour.

If such a change of orientation occurred all round—and it is curious how sensitive belligerent nations are to one another's moods—the negotiations would take the form of an attempt to realize by common counsel an aim desired by all the negotiating parties alike. League of Nations, disarmament, "self-determination of nationalities," and even reparation to Belgium would not be terms imposed by the conqueror upon the conquered and liable to be evaded as soon as the latter had power to do so, but a set of finger-posts devised by all parties for the purpose of escaping together

from a condition equally disastrous to all of them. Such a conference would approach international questions with experience and knowledge, and would admit no doubt large elements of caution and compromise. But it would be out for Justice and Peace, for the general good, not the particular "interests."

The third possibility is that foretold by Grey in his warning to the Austrian Ambassador in July 1914. If the Governments cannot make a "clean peace," the forces of Revolution can, and know that they can. I do not think that revolution in England is at all a possibility, except in the sense that a very great transfer of votes at a General Election might be termed a revolution. But the Bolshevik terms are before the world in their complete internationalism and splendid disregard of detail. The "minority" Socialists of Germany and Austria are longing to accept them with or without modifications, and we must remember that "minority" is now only a nickname. The French and British and Italian Socialists, whether revolutionary or non-revolutionary, could accept something very like them. If the strain of war is prolonged beyond a certain point it seems almost inevitable that the common longing for peace among the suffering poor throughout Europe, reinforced by a vague but widespread conviction that, while their Governments can never agree, they themselves are agreed already, should lead to some catastrophic upheaval which would shake all Europe and even have its effect on England. The peace terms in that case would be "Bolshevik" peace terms: un-

compromising principles of freedom and revolutionary justice carried out with very imperfect knowledge of detail and no regard for any mere human interests that stood in the path of the pure doctrine; a nucleus, so to speak, of magnificent world-healing idealism with a ragged fringe of confusion and wreckage incalculable.

Of these possible terms of peace, either the second or the third would, in their different ways, attain the central object of the war. The first would not. An imperialist peace, even if combined with a complete victory over Germany, would not destroy militarism. It would intensify it in Central Europe, and perhaps plant it everywhere else. For a peace not aiming at international justice, a peace based on nothing but military conquest, would leave us all arming and plotting for the coming war of revenge. I know many powerful people believe that this is, in any case, the only possible issue; that the war is a war against Germany and all Germans, quite irrespective of such abstractions as "militarism," "autocracy," or the like; that the only solution of it is to kill Germans till they cease fighting, and then remain armed to the teeth so as to kill them again whenever they look as if they might again be able to fight. I recognize the historical arguments, such as they are, in favour of this view, and my answer to it is quite clear. If that sort of aim is to dominate the practical policy of the fighting nations, then, in my judgement, Bolshevism would be better, and, what is more, Bolshevism will come first.

So much for the soul of the War; but it also has, alas! a body. And while we discuss these far-off prospects the guns are sounding and our men being killed and killing. Three thousand odd casualties a day to this country alone, and the number likely to increase with the spring! A great German attack is massing against us, and if it should succeed, and the battle-line of the Entente on sea and land be broken, we shall lie at the mercy of the most ruthless and consistently evil Power that has arisen in Europe since the Dark Ages. It is a grave mistake to forget policy while waging a war, but it is mere madness to forget the realities of war through being concentrated on ideal solutions of policy. The two must always go together.

I will not discuss the war outlook. It changes too fast. It is certainly grim at the moment; worse than it was a year ago. But we believe in our men, and our brazen enemy has after all his feet of clay. He has been found out. His whole system is one which the world loathes, and his own people suspects and condemns. He is full of pride, after the Italian retreat and the disintegration of Russia; but he is ignoring the whispers of his own conscience and the mutterings of his own working class, and he is pretending to ignore America.

I want Peace. I have always wanted Peace. The whole war to me is a misery and a loathing. I have no satisfaction in the killing of Germans. I wish nothing but a peaceful and honourable future for Germans as well as for the other nations of Europe,

a Peace with security to all and oppression to none. But, until the enemy begins to be of the same opinion, I see nothing for it but to fight and endure like grim death.

. . . . . .

In the above I have spoken almost entirely of Great Britain and British policy; not of my own country, Australia, nor the other Dominions; not of our Allies, either old or new. Yet they have all been in my thoughts, and America most of all. For America brings in two ways just the help that we need most; help against the possibility of defeat, and help against the danger of an Imperialist Peace. She brings help both to the soul and the body of our enterprise. But I have spoken of this in the American Preface.

It is interesting to an admirer of Lord Grey's to observe how, now that Grey has ceased to preside over the diplomacy of the Entente Powers, the most commanding figure in our common politics is one who upholds in word and spirit exactly the old Grey policy.

President Wilson, it is hardly too much to say, is now the Leader of the Allied Cause. He leads partly because he represents the strongest and least exhausted of the belligerent nations; partly because he alone is entangled with no treaties of alliance, paralysed by no dissentient colleagues, and liable to be turned out of office by no newspaper intrigues; but partly also because both he and the nation behind him are seeking nothing for themselves in this war, and

the policy he expresses is shaped by no interest except the common interest of mankind.[1]

As to the future, doubtless the world has changed, and we older men must keep our minds ready to accept its changes. Much of the old order of society has probably gone, not only the worser parts but many things whose loss will leave us a less fine people. The cup of the sufferings of this generation will not be exhausted for long years to come. But, to say nothing of the prospect of internal reconstruction, if we can live to see a Peace concluded which aims not at aggrandizement, not at revenge, not at the snatching of military advantages or commercial preferences for this country or that, but at being what it professes to be, a Peace for mankind, a Peace built to endure and containing in it the seeds of freedom and of brotherhood, a Peace in the spirit of Grey and of Wilson, then indeed the men of this poor blood-stained generation may utter their *Nunc Dimittis* and their graves be remembered with a blessing rather than a curse.

[1] See the valuable pamphlet, *America and Freedom*, being the Statements of President Wilson on the War with a Preface by Viscount Grey. (Allen & Unwin. 1*s*.)

G. M.

January, 1918.

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FAITH, WAR, AND POLICY

FAITH, WAR, AND POLICY

I

FIRST THOUGHTS ON THE WAR

(August, 1914)

I

"Not much news: Great Britain has declared war on Austria." The words fell quite simply, and with no intention of irony, from the lips of a friend of mine who picked up the newspaper on the day when I began to write down these thoughts, August 13. So amazingly had the world changed since the 4th. And it has changed even more by the time when I revise the proofs.

During the month of July and earlier, English politics were by no means dull. For my own part, my mind was profoundly occupied with a number of public questions and causes: the whole maintenance of law and democratic government seemed to be threatened, not to speak of social reform and the great self-redeeming movements of the working-class. In the forefront came anxiety for Home Rule and the Parliament Act, and a growing indignation against various classes of "wreckers": those reactionaries who seemed to be playing with rebellion, playing with militarism, recklessly inflaming the party spirit of minorities so as to make parliamentary government impossible; those revolutionaries who were openly preaching the Class War and urging the working-man

to mistrust his own leaders and representatives and believe in nothing but some helpless gospel of hate.

And now that is all swept away. We think no more of our great causes, and we think no more of our mutual hatreds. Good and evil come together. Our higher ideals are forgotten, but we are a band of brothers standing side by side.

This is a great thing. The fine, instinctive generosity with which the House of Commons, from Mr. Bonar Law to Mr. Redmond, rose to the crisis has spread an impulse over the country. There is a bond of fellowship between Englishmen who before had no meeting-ground. In time past I have sometimes envied the working-men who can simply hail a stranger as "mate": we dons and men of letters seem in ordinary times to have no "mates" and no gift for getting them. But the ice between man and man is broken now.

I think, too, that the feeling between different classes must have softened. Rich business men, whom I can remember a short time ago tediously eloquent on the vices of trades-unionists and of the working-classes in general, are now instantly and without hesitation making large sacrifices and facing heavy risks to see that as few men as possible shall be thrown out of work, and that no women and children shall starve. And working-men who have not money to give are giving more than money, and giving it without question or grudge. Thank God, we did not hate each other as much as we imagined; or else, while the hatred was real enough on the surface, at the back of our minds we loved each other more.

And the band of brothers is greater and wider than any of us dared to believe. Many English hearts must have swelled with almost incredulous gratitude to hear

of the messages and the gifts which come flooding in from all the dominions overseas: the gold, the grain, the sugar, the tobacco; its special produce coming from each State, and from all of them throngs of young men offering their strength and their life-blood. And India above all! One who has cared much about India and has friends among Indian Nationalists cannot read with dry eyes the messages that come from all races and creeds of India, from Hindu and Moslem societies, from princes and holy men and even political exiles. . . . We have not always been sympathetic in our government of India; we have not always been wise. But we have tried to be just; and we have given to India the best work of our best men. It would have been hard on us if India had shown no loyalty at all; but she has given us more than we deserved, more than we should have dared to claim. Neither Indian nor Englishman can forget it.

II

And there is something else. Travellers who have returned from France or Belgium — or Germany for that matter — tell us of the unhesitating heroism with which the ordinary men and women are giving themselves to the cause of their nation. A friend of mine heard the words of one Frenchwoman to another who was seeing her husband's train off to the front: "*Ne pleurez pas, il vous voit encore.*" When he was out of sight the tears might come! . . . Not thousands but millions of women are saying words like that to themselves, and millions of men going out to face death.

We in England have not yet been put to the same tests as France and Belgium. We are in the flush of our

first emotion; we have not yet had our nerves shaken by advancing armies, or our endurance ground down by financial distress. But, as far as I can judge of the feelings of people whom I meet, they seem to me to be ready to answer any call that comes. We ask for 200,000 recruits and receive 300,000, for half a million and we receive three quarters. We ask for more still, and the recruiting offices are overflowing. They cannot cope with the crowds of young men who cheerfully wait their turn at the office doors or on the pavement, while fierce old gentlemen continue to scold them in the newspapers. Certainly we are a quaint people.

And in the field! A non-combatant stands humbled before the wonderful story of the retreat from Mons — the gallantry, the splendid skill, the mutual confidence of all ranks, the absolute faithfulness. One hardly dares praise such deeds; one admires them in silence. And it is not the worshippers of war who have done this; it is we, the good-natured, unmilitarist, ultra-liberal people, the nation of humanitarians and shopkeepers.

Our army, indeed, is a professional army. What the French and the Belgians have done is an even more significant fact for civilization. It shows that the cultured, progressive, easy-living, peace-loving nations of western Europe are not corrupted, at least as far as courage goes. The world has just seen them, bourgeois and working-men, clerks, schoolmasters, musicians, grocers, ready in a moment when the call came; able to march and fight for long days of scorching sun or icy rain; willing, if need be, to die for their homes and countries, with no panic, no softening of the fibre . . . resolute to face death and to kill.

III

For there is that side of it too. We have now not only to strain every nerve to help our friend — we must strain every nerve also to injure our enemy. This is horrible, but we must try to face the truth. For my own part, I find that I do desperately desire to hear of German dreadnoughts sunk in the North Sea. Mines are treacherous engines of death; but I should be only too glad to help to lay one for them. When I see that 20,000 Germans have been killed in such-and-such an engagement, and next day that it was only 2000, I am sorry.

That is where we are. We are fighting for that which we love, whatever we call it. It is the Right, but it is something even more than the Right. For our lives, for England, for the liberty of western Europe, for the possibility of peace and friendship between nations; for something which we should rather die than lose. And lose it we shall unless we can beat the Germans.

IV

Yet I have scarcely met a single person who seems to hate the Germans. We abominate their dishonest Government, their unscrupulous and arrogant diplomacy, the whole spirit of "blood-and-iron" ambition which seems to have spread from Prussia through a great part of the nation. But not the people in general. They, too, by whatever criminal folly they were led into war, are fighting now for what they call "the Right." For their lives and homes and their national pride, for that strange "Culture," that idol of blood and clay and true gold, which they have built up with so many tears.

They have been trebly deceived; deceived by their Government, deceived by their own idolatry, deceived by their sheer terror. They are ringed about by enemies; their one ally is broken; they hear the thunder of Cossack hoofs in the east coming ever closer; and hordes of stupid moujiks behind them, innumerable, clumsy, barbarous, as they imagine in their shuddering dread, treading down the beloved Fatherland as they come. . . . What do Germans care for punctilios and neutrality treaties in the face of such a horror as that?

No: we cannot hate or blame the people in general. And certainly not the individual Germans whom we know. I have just by me a letter from young Fritz Hackmann, who was in Oxford last term and brought me an introduction from a Greek scholar in Berlin: a charming letter, full of gratitude for the very small friendlinesses I had been able to show him. I remember his sunny smile and his bow with a click of the heels. He is now fighting us. . . . And there is Paul Maass, too, a young Doctor of Philosophy, recently married. He sent me a short time back the photograph of his baby, Ulf, and we exchanged small jokes about Ulf's look of wisdom and his knowledge of Greek and his imperious habits. And now of course Maass is with his regiment and we shall do our best to kill him, and after that to starve Ulf and Ulf's mother.

It is well for us to remember what war means when reduced to terms of private human life. Doubtless we have most of us met disagreeable Germans and been angry with them; but I doubt if we ever wanted to cut their throats or blow them to pieces with lyddite. And many thousands of us have German friends, or have come across good straight Germans in business, or have

carried on smiling and incompetent conversations with kindly German peasants on walking tours. We must remember such things as these, and not hate the Germans.

"A little later it may be different. In a few weeks English and Germans will have done each other cruel and irreparable wrongs. The blood of those we love will lie between us. We shall hear stories of horrible suffering. Atrocities will be committed by a few bad or stupid people on both sides, and will be published and distorted and magnified. It will be hard to avoid hatred then; so it is well to try to think things out while our minds are still clear, while we still hate the war and not the enemy."

So I wrote three weeks ago. By the time I revise these lines the prophecy has been more than fulfilled. No one had anticipated then that the nightmare doctrines of Bismarck and Nietzsche and Bernhardi would be actually enforced by official orders. "Cause to non-combatants the maximum of suffering: leave the women and children nothing but their eyes to weep with. . . ." We thought they said these things just to startle and shock us; and it now appears that some of them meant what they said. . . . Still we must not hate the German people. Who knows how many secret acts of mercy, mercy at risk of life and against orders, were done at Louvain and Dinant? Germans are not demons; they are naturally fine and good people. And they will wake from their evil dream.

V

"Never again!" I see that a well-known imperialist writes to the papers saying that these words should be embroidered on the kit-bags of the Royal Navy and

painted on the knapsacks of all our soldiers. The aspiration is perhaps too bold, for "Never" is a very large word; but I believe it is the real aspiration of most civilized men, certainly of most Englishmen. We are fighting for our national life, for our ideals of freedom and honest government and fair dealing between nations: but most men, if asked what they would like to attain at the end of this war, if it is successful, would probably agree in their answer. We seek no territory, no aggrandizement, no revenge; we only want to be safe from the recurrence of this present horror. We want permanent peace for Europe and freedom for each nation.

What is the way to attain it? The writer whom I have quoted goes on: "The war must not end until German warships are sunk, her fortresses razed to the ground, her army disbanded, her munitions destroyed, and the military and civil bureaucrats responsible for opening hell gates are shot or exiled." As if that would bring us any nearer to a permanent peace! Crushing Germany would do no good. It would point straight towards a war of revenge. It is not Germany, it is a system, that needs crushing. Other nations before Germany have menaced the peace of Europe, and other nations will do so again after Germany, if the system remains the same.

VI

It is interesting to look back at the records of the Congress of Vienna in 1815, at the end of the last great war of allied Europe against a military despotism.

It was hoped then, a standard historian tells us, "that so great an opportunity would not be lost, but that the statesmen would initiate such measures of international

disarmament as would perpetuate the blessings of that peace which Europe was enjoying after twenty years of warfare." Certain Powers wished to use the occasion for crushing and humiliating France; but fortunately they did not carry the Congress with them. Talleyrand persuaded the Congress to accept the view that the recent wars had not been wars of nations, but of principles. It had not been Austria, Russia, Prussia, England, against France; it had been the principle of legitimacy against all that was illegitimate, treaty-breaking, revolution, usurpation. Bonapartism was to be destroyed; France was not to be injured.

Castlereagh, the English representative, concentrated his efforts upon two great objects. The first, which he just failed to obtain, owing chiefly to difficulties about Turkey, was a really effective and fully armed Concert of Europe. He wished for a united guarantee from all the Powers that they would accept the settlement made by the Congress and would, in future, wage collective war against the first breaker of the peace. The second object, which he succeeded in gaining, was, curiously enough, an international declaration of the abolition of the slave trade.

The principle of legitimacy — of ordinary law and right and custom — as against lawless ambition: a Concert of Powers pledged by collective treaty to maintain and enforce peace; and the abolition of the slave trade! It sounds like the scheme of some new Utopia, and it was really a main part of the political programme of the leaders of the Congress of Vienna — of Castlereagh, Metternich, Talleyrand, Alexander of Russia, and Frederick William of Prussia. . . . They are not names to rouse enthusiasm nowadays. All except Talleyrand

were confessed enemies of freedom and enlightenment and almost everything that we regard as progressive; and Talleyrand, though occasionally on the right side in such matters, was not a person to inspire confidence. Yet, after all, they were more or less reasonable human beings, and a bitter experience had educated them. Doubtless they blundered; they went on all kinds of wrong principles; they based their partition of Europe on what they called "legitimacy," a perfectly artificial and false legitimacy, rather than nationality; they loathed and dreaded popular movements; they could not quite keep their hands from a certain amount of picking and stealing. Yet, on the whole, we find these men at the end of the Great War fixing their minds not on glory and prestige and revenge, not on conventions and shams, but on ideals so great and true and humane and simple that most Englishmen in ordinary life are ashamed of mentioning them; trying hard to make peace permanent on the basis of what was recognized as "legitimate" or fair; and, amid many differences, agreeing at least in the universal abolition of the slave trade.

VII

Our next conference of Europe ought to do far better if only we can be sure that it will meet in the same high spirit. Instead of Castlereagh, we shall send from England some one like Mr. Asquith or Sir Edward Grey, with ten times more progressive and liberal feeling and ten times more insight and understanding. Even suppose we send a Conservative, Mr. Balfour or Lord Lansdowne, the advance upon Castlereagh will be almost as great. Instead of Talleyrand, France will send one of her many

able republican leaders, from Clemenceau to Delcassé, certainly more honest and humane than Talleyrand. And Germany — who can say? Except that it may be some one very different from these militarist schemers who have brought their country to ruin. In any case it is likely to be a wiser man than Frederick William, just as Russia is bound to send a wiser man than Alexander.

And behind these representatives there will be a deeper and far more intelligent feeling in the various peoples. In 1815 the nations were sick of war after long fighting. I doubt if there was any widespread conviction that war was in itself an abomination and an outrage on humanity. Philosophers felt it, some inarticulate women and peasants and workmen felt it. But now such a feeling is amost universal. It commands a majority in any third-class railway carriage; it is expressed almost as a matter of course in the average newspaper.

Between Waterloo and the present day there has passed one of the greatest and most swiftly progressive centuries of all human history, and the heart of Europe is really changed. I do not say we shall not have Jingo crowds or that our own hearts will not thrill with the various emotions of war, whether base or noble. But there is a change. Ideas that once belonged to a few philosophers have sunk into common men's minds; Tolstoy has taught us, the intimate records of modern wars have taught us, free intercourse with foreigners has educated us, even the illustrated papers have made us realize things. In 1914 it is not that we happen to be sick of war; it is that we mean to extirpate war out of the normal possibilities of civilized life, as we have extirpated leprosy and typhus.

VIII

What kind of settlement can we hope to attain at the end of it all?

The question is still far off, and may have assumed astonishingly different shapes by the time we reach it, but it is perhaps well to try, now while we are calm and unhurt, to think out what we would most desire.

First of all, no revenge, no deliberate humiliation of any enemy, no picking and stealing.

Next, a drastic resettlement of all those burning problems which carry in them the seeds of European war, especially the problems of territory. Many of the details will be very difficult; some may prove insoluble. But in general we must try to arrange, even at considerable cost, that territory goes with nationality. The annexation of Alsace-Lorraine has disturbed the west of Europe for forty years; the wrong distributions of territory in the Balkan peninsula have kept the spark of war constantly alive in the East, and have not been fully corrected by the last Balkan settlement. Every nation which sees a slice of itself cut off and held under foreign rule is a danger to peace, and so is every nation that holds by force or fraud an alien province. At this moment, if Austria had not annexed some millions of Serbians in Bosnia and Herzegovina she would have no mortal quarrel with Serbia. Any drastic rearrangement of this sort will probably involve the break-up of Austria, a larger Italy, a larger Serbia, a larger Germany — for the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, of Danish Schleswig, and the Polish provinces would be more than compensated by the accession of the Germanic parts of Austria — and a larger Russia. But it is not big nations that are

a menace to peace; it is nations with a grievance or nations who know that others have a grievance against them.

And shall we try again to achieve Castlereagh's and Alexander's ideal of a permanent Concert, pledged to make collective war upon the peace-breaker? Surely we must. We must at all costs and in spite of all difficulties, because the alternative means such unspeakable failure. We must learn to agree, we civilized nations of Europe, or else we must perish. I believe that the chief counsel of wisdom here is to be sure to go far enough. We need a permanent Concert, perhaps a permanent Common Council, in which every awkward problem can be dealt with before it has time to grow dangerous, and in which outvoted minorities must accustom themselves to giving way. If we examine the failures of the European Concert in recent years we shall find them generally due to two large causes. Either some Powers came into the council with unclean hands, determined to grab alien territory or fatally compromised because they had grabbed it in the past; or else they met too late, when the air was full of mistrust, and not to yield had become a point of honour. Once make certain of good faith and a clean start, and surely there is in the great Powers of Europe sufficient unity of view and feeling about fundamental matters to make it possible for them to work honestly together — at any rate, when the alternative is stark ruin. . . . It is well to remember that in this matter, from Alexander I onward, Russia has steadily done her best to lead the way.

And the abolition of the slave trade! It is wonderful to think that that was not only talked about but really achieved; the greatest abomination in the world

definitely killed, finished and buried, never to return, as a result of the meeting of the Powers at the end of the Great War. What can we hope for to equal that? The limitation of armaments seems almost small in comparison.

We saw in the first week of the war what a nation and a government can do when the need or the opportunity comes. Armies and fleets mobilized, war risks assured, railways taken over, prices fixed . . . things that seemed almost impossible accomplished successfully in a few days. One sentence in Mr. Lloyd George's speech on the financial situation ran thus, if I remember the words: "This part of the subject presents some peculiar difficulties, but I have no doubt they will be surmounted with the utmost ease." That is the spirit in which our Government has risen to its crisis, a spirit not of shallow optimism, but of that active and hard-thinking confidence which creates its own fulfilment. The power of man over circumstance is now — even now in the midst of this one terrific failure — immeasurably greater than it has ever yet been in history. Every year that passes has shown its increase. When the next settling day comes the real will of reasonable man should be able to assert itself and achieve its end with a completeness not conceivable in 1815.

IX

This is not the time to make any definite proposals. Civilization has still many slave trades to abolish. The trade in armaments is perhaps the most oppressive of all, but there are others also, slave trades social and intimate and international; no one can tell yet which ones

and how many it may be possible to overthrow. But there is one thing that we must see. This war and the national aspiration behind the war must not be allowed to fall into the hands of the militarists. I do not say that we must not be ready for some form of universal service: that will depend on the circumstances in which the war leaves us. But we must not be militarized in mind and feeling; we must keep our politics British and not Prussian. That is the danger. It is the danger in every war. In time of war every interest, every passion, tends to be concentrated on the mere fighting, the gaining of advantages, the persistent use of cunning and force. An atmosphere tends to grow up in which the militarist and the schemer are at home and the liberal and democrat homeless.

There are many thousands of social reformers and radicals in this country who instinctively loathe war, and have been convinced only with the utmost reluctance, if at all, of the necessity of our fighting. The danger is that these people, containing among them some of our best guides and most helpful political thinkers, may from disgust and discouragement fall into the background and leave public opinion to the mercy of our own Von Tirpitzes and Bernhardis. That would be the last culminating disaster. It would mean that the war had ceased to be a war for free Europe against militarism, and had become merely one of the ordinary sordid and bloody struggles of nation against nation, one link in the insane chain of wrongs that lead ever to worse wrongs.

One may well be thankful that the strongest of the neutral Powers is guided by a leader so wise and upright and temperate as President Wilson. One may be thankful, too, that both here and in France we have in power

not only a very able Ministry, but a strongly Liberal and peace-loving Ministry. In the first place, it unites the country far more effectively than any Ministry which could be suspected of Jingoism. In the second place, it gives us a chance of a permanent settlement, based on wisdom and not on ambition. It is fortunate also that in Russia the more liberal elements in the Government seem to be predominant. Some English Liberals seem to be sorry and half ashamed that we have Russia as an ally; for my own part I am glad and proud. Not only because of her splendid military achievements, but because, so far as I can read the signs of such things, there is in Russia, more than in other nations, a vast untapped reservoir of spiritual power, of idealism, of striving for a nobler life. And that is what Europe will most need at the end of this bitter material struggle. I am proud to think that the liberal and progressive elements in Russia are looking towards England and feeling strengthened by English friendship. "This is for us," said a great Russian Liberal to me some days ago, — "this is for us a *Befreiungskrieg* (war of liberation). After this, reaction is impossible." We are fighting not only to defend Russian governors and Russian peasants against German invasion, but also, and perhaps even more profoundly, to enable the Russia of Turgenieff and Tolstoy, the Russia of many artists and many martyrs, to work out its destiny and its freedom. If the true Russia has a powerful voice in the final settlement it will be a great thing for humanity.

Of course, all these hopes may be shattered and made ridiculous before the settlement comes. They would be shattered, probably, by a German victory; not because Germans are wicked, but because a German victory at

the present time would mean a victory for blood-and-iron. They would be shattered, certainly, if in each separate country the liberal forces abandoned the situation to the reactionaries, and stood aside while the nation fell into that embitterment and brutalization of feeling which is the natural consequence of a long war.

To prevent the first of these perils is the work of our armies and navies; to prevent the second should be the work of all thoughtful non-combatants. It may be a difficult task, but at least it is not hideous; and some of the work that we must do is. So hideous, indeed, that at times it seems strange that we can carry it out at all — this war of civilized men against civilized men, against our intellectual teachers, our brothers in art and science and healing medicine, and so large a part of all that makes life beautiful. When we remember all this it makes us feel lost and heavy-hearted, like men struggling and unable to move in an evil dream. . . . So, it seems, for the time being we must forget it. We modern men are accustomed by the needs of life to this division of feelings. In every war, in every competition almost, there is something of the same difficulty, and we have learned to keep the two sides of our mind apart. We must fight our hardest, indomitably, gallantly, even joyously, forgetting all else while we have to fight. When the fight is over we must remember.

II

HOW CAN WAR EVER BE RIGHT?

(September, 1914)

I HAVE all my life been an advocate of Peace. I hate war, not merely for its own cruelty and folly, but because it is the enemy of all the causes that I care for most, of social progress and good government and all friendliness and gentleness of life, as well as of art and learning and literature. I have spoken and presided at more meetings than I can remember for peace and arbitration and the promotion of international friendship. I opposed the policy of war in South Africa with all my energies, and have been either outspokenly hostile or inwardly unsympathetic towards almost every war that Great Britain has waged in my lifetime. If I may speak more personally, there is none of my own work into which I have put more intense feeling than into my translation of Euripides' "Trojan Women," the first great denunciation of war in European literature. I do not regret any word that I have spoken or written in the cause of Peace, nor have I changed, so far as I know, any opinion that I have previously held on this subject. Yet I believe firmly that we were right to declare war against Germany on August 4, 1914, and that to have remained neutral in that crisis would have been a failure in public duty.

A heavy responsibility — there is no doubt of it — lies upon Great Britain. Our allies, France and Russia,

Belgium and Serbia, had no choice; the war was, in various degrees, forced on all of them. We only, after deliberately surveying the situation, when Germany would have preferred for the moment not to fight us, of our free will declared war. And we were right.

How can such a thing be? It is easy enough to see that our cause is right, and the German cause, by all ordinary human standards, desperately wrong. It is hardly possible to study the official papers issued by the British, the German, and the Russian Governments, without seeing that Germany — or some party in Germany — had plotted this war beforehand; that she chose a moment when she thought her neighbours were at a disadvantage; that she prevented Austria from making a settlement even at the last moment; that in order to get more quickly at France she violated her treaty with Belgium. Evidence too strong to resist seems to show that she has carried out the violation with a purposeful cruelty that has no parallel in the wars of modern and civilized nations. Yet some people may still feel gravely doubtful. Germany's ill-doing is no reason for us to do likewise. We did our best to keep the general peace; there we were right. We failed; the German Government made war in spite of us. There we were unfortunate. It was a war already on an enormous scale, a vast network of calamity ranging over five nations; and we decided to make it larger still. There we were wrong. Could we not have stood aside, as the United States stand, ready to help refugees and sufferers, anxious to heal wounds and not make them, watchful for the first chance of putting an end to this time of horror?

"Try for a moment," an objector to our policy might

say, "to realize the extent of suffering involved in one small corner of a battlefield. You have seen a man here and there badly hurt in an accident; you have seen perhaps a horse with its back broken, and you can remember how dreadful it seemed to you. In that one corner how many men, how many horses, will be lying, hurt far worse and just waiting to die? Indescribable wounds, extreme torment; and all, far further than any eye can see, multiplied and multiplied! And, for all your righteous indignation against Germany, what have these done? The horses are not to blame for anybody's foreign policy. They have only come where their masters took them. And the masters themselves . . . admitting that certain highly placed Germans, whose names we are not sure of, are as wicked as ever you like, these soldiers — peasants and working-men and shopkeepers and schoolmasters — have really done nothing in particular; at least, perhaps they have now, but they had not up to the time when you, seeing they were involved in war and misery already, decided to make war on them also and increase their sufferings. You say that justice must be done on conspirators and public malefactors. But so far as the rights and wrongs of the war go, you are simply condemning innocent men, by thousands and thousands, to death, or even to mutilation and torture; is that the best way to satisfy your sense of justice? These innocent people, you will say, are fighting to protect the guilty parties whom you are determined to reach. Well, perhaps, at the end of the war, after millions of innocent people have suffered, you may at last, if all goes well with your arms, get at the 'guilty parties.' You will hold an inquiry, with imperfect evidence and biased judges; you will decide — in all likeli-

hood wrongly — that a dozen very stupid and obstinate Prussians with long titles are the guilty parties, and even then you will not know what to do with them. You will probably try, and almost certainly fail, to make them somehow feel ashamed or humiliated. It is likely enough that you will merely make them into national heroes.

"And after all, this is assuming quite the best sort of war: a war in which one party is wrong and the other right, and the right wins. Suppose both are wrong; or suppose the wrong party wins? It is as likely as not; for, if the right party is helped by his good conscience, the wrong has probably taken pains to have the odds on his side before he began quarrelling. In that case all the wild expenditure of blood and treasure, all the immeasurable suffering of innocent individuals and dumb animals, all the tears of women and children in the background, have taken place not to vindicate the right, but to establish the wrong. To do a little evil that great or certain good may come is all very well; but to do almost infinite evil for a doubtful chance of attaining something which half the people concerned may think good and the other half think bad, and which in no imaginable case can ever be attained in fullness or purity . . . that is neither good morals nor good sense. Anybody not in a passion must see that it is insanity."

I sympathize with every step of this argument; yet I think it is wrong. It is judging of the war as a profit-and-loss account, and reckoning, moreover, only the immediate material consequences. It leaves out of sight the cardinal fact that in some causes it is better to fight and be broken than to yield peacefully; that sometimes the mere act of resisting to the death is in itself a victory.

Let us try to understand this. The Greeks who fought and died at Thermopylæ had no manner of doubt that they were right so to fight and die, and all posterity has agreed with them. They probably knew they would be defeated. They probably expected that, after their defeat, the Persians would proceed easily to conquer the rest of Greece, and would treat it much more harshly because it had resisted. But such considerations did not affect them. They would not consent to their country's dishonour.

Take again a very clear modern case: the fine story of the French tourist who was captured, together with a priest and some other white people, by Moorish robbers. The Moors gave their prisoners the choice either to trample on the Cross or to be killed. The Frenchman happened to be a Freethinker and an anti-clerical. He disliked Christianity. But he was not going to trample on the Cross at the orders of a robber. He stuck to his companions and died.

This sense of honour and the respect for this sense of honour are very deep instincts in the average man. In the United States there is a rather specially strong feeling against mixture of blood, not only with the blood of coloured people, but with that of the large masses of mankind who are lumped together as "dagoes" or "hunkies." Yet I have noticed that persons with a dash of Red Indian blood are not ashamed but rather proud of it. And if you look for the reason, I suspect it lies in the special reputation which the Indian has acquired, that he would never consent to be a slave. He preferred to fight till he was dead.

A deal of nonsense, no doubt, is talked about "honour" and "dishonour." They are feelings based on sen-

timent, not on reason; the standards by which they are judged are often conventional or shallow, and sometimes utterly false. Yet honour and dishonour are real things. I will not try to define them; but will only notice that, like religion, their characteristic is that they admit of no bargaining. Indeed, we can almost think of honour as being simply that which a free man values more than life, and dishonour as that which he avoids more than suffering or death. And the important point for us is that there are such things.

There are some people, followers of Tolstoy, who accept this position so far as dying is concerned, but will have nothing to do with killing. Passive resistance, they say, is right; martyrdom is right; but to resist violence by violence is sin.

I was once walking with a friend and disciple of Tolstoy's in a country lane, and a little girl was running in front of us. I put to him the well-known question: "Suppose you saw a man, wicked or drunk or mad, run out and attack that child. You are a big man and carry a big stick: would you not stop him and, if necessary, knock him down?" "No," he said, "why should I commit a sin? I would try to persuade him, I would stand in his way, I would let him kill me, but I would not strike him." Some few people will always be found, less than one in a thousand, to take this view. They will say: "Let the little girl be killed or carried off; let the wicked man commit another wickedness; I, at any rate, will not add to the mass of useless violence that I see all round me."

With such persons one cannot reason, though one can often respect them. Nearly every normal man will feel

that the real sin, the real dishonour, lies in allowing an abominable act to be committed under your eyes while you have the strength to prevent it. And the stronger you are, the greater your chance of success, by so much the more are you bound to intervene. If the robbers are overpoweringly strong and there is no chance of beating or baffling them, then and only then should you think of martyrdom. Martyrdom is not the best possibility. It is almost the worst. It is a counsel of despair, the last resort when there is no hope of successful resistance. The best thing — suppose once the robbers are there and intent on crime — the best thing is to overawe them at once; the next best, to defeat them after a hard struggle; the third best, to resist vainly and be martyred; the worst of all, the one evil that need never be endured, is to let them have their will without protest. (As for converting them from their evil ways, that is a process which may be hoped for afterwards.)

We have noticed that in all these cases of honour there is, or at least there seems to be, no counting of cost, no balancing of good and evil. In ordinary conduct, we are always balancing the probable results of this course or that; but when honour or religion comes on the scene all such balancing ceases. If you argued to the Christian martyr: "Suppose you do burn the pinch of incense, what will be the harm? All your friends know you are really a Christian: they will not be misled. The idol will not be any the better for the incense, nor will your own true God be any the worse. Why should you bring misery on yourself and all your family?" Or suppose you pleaded, with the French atheist: "Why in the world should you not trample on the Cross? It is the sign of the clericalism to which you object. Even if

trampling somewhat exaggerates your sentiments, the harm is small. Who will be a penny the worse for your trampling? While you will live instead of dying, and all your family be happy instead of wretched." Suppose you said to the Red Indian: "My friend, you are outnumbered by ten to one. If you will submit unconditionally to these pale-faces, and be always civil and obliging, they will probably treat you quite well. If they do not, well, you can reconsider the situation later on. No need to get yourself killed at once."

The people concerned would not condescend to meet your arguments. Perhaps they can be met, perhaps not. But it is in the very essence of religion or honour that it must outweigh all material considerations. The point of honour is the point at which a man says to some proposal, "I will not do it. I will rather die."

These things are far easier to see where one man is involved than where it is a whole nation. But they arise with nations too. In the case of a nation the material consequences are much larger, and the point of honour is apt to be less clear. But, in general, whenever one nation in dealing with another relies simply on force or fraud, and denies to its neighbour the common consideration due to human beings, a point of honour must arise.

Austria says suddenly to Serbia: "You are a wicked little State. I have annexed and governed against their will some millions of your countrymen, yet you are still full of anti-Austrian feeling, which I do not intend to allow. You will dismiss from your service all officials, politicians, and soldiers who do not love Austria, and I will further send you from time to time lists of persons

whom you are to dismiss or put to death. And if you do not agree to this within forty-eight hours, I, being vastly stronger than you, will make you." As a matter of fact, Serbia did her very best to comply with Austria's demands; she accepted about two thirds of them, and asked for arbitration on the remaining third. But it is clear that she could not accept them all without being dishonoured. That is, Serbia would have given up her freedom at the threat of force; the Serbs would no longer be a free people, and every individual Serb would have been humiliated. He would have confessed himself to be the kind of man who will yield when an Austrian bullies him. And if it is urged that under good Austrian government Serbia would become richer and safer, and the Serbian peasants get better markets, such pleas cannot be listened to. They are a price offered for slavery; and a free man will not accept slavery at a price.

Germany, again, says to Belgium (we leave out for the moment the fact of Germany's special treaty obligations), "We have no quarrel with you, but we intend for certain reasons to march across your territory and perhaps fight a battle or two there. We know that you are pledged by treaty not to allow any such thing, but we cannot help that. Consent, and we will pay you some compensation afterwards; refuse, and we shall make you wish you had never been born." At that moment Belgium was a free self-governing State. If she had yielded to Germany's demand, she would have ceased to be either. It is possible that, if Germany had been completely victorious and France quite unable to retaliate, Belgium would have suffered no great material injury; but she would have taken orders from a stranger who had no right to give them, simply because he was strong

and Belgium dared not face him. Belgium refused. She has had some of her principal towns destroyed, some thousands of her soldiers killed, many more thousands of her women, children, and non-combatants outraged and beggared; but she is still free. She has still her honour.

Let us think this matter out more closely. Our Tolstoyan will say: "We speak of Belgium's honour and Serbia's honour; but who is Serbia and who is Belgium? There is no such person as either. There are only great numbers of people who happen to be Serbians and Belgians, and who mostly have had nothing to do with the questions at issue. Some of them are honourable people, some dishonourable. The honour of each one of them depends very much on whether he pays his debts and tells the truth, but not in the least on whether a number of foreigners walk through his country or interfere with his Government. King Albert and his Ministers might feel humiliated if the German Government compelled them to give way against their will; but would the ordinary population? Would the ordinary peasant or shopkeeper or artisan in the districts of Visé and Liège and Louvain have felt particularly disgraced or ashamed? He would probably have made a little money and been greatly amused by the sight of the troops passing. Who will pretend that he would have suffered any injury that can for a moment be compared with what he has suffered now, in order that his Government may feel proud of itself?"

I will not raise the point that, as a matter of fact, to grant a right of way to Germany would have been equivalent to declaring war against France, so that Belgium would not, by giving up her independence, have

been spared the danger of war. I will assume that nothing but honour was involved. In that form, this question goes to the root of our whole conception of citizenship and the position of man in society. And I believe that our Tolstoyan friend is profoundly wrong.

Is it true, in a healthy and well-governed State, that the average citizen is indifferent to the honour of his country? We know that it is not. True, the average citizen may often not understand what is going on, but as soon as he knows he cares. Suppose for a moment that the King, or the Prime Minister, or the President of the United States, were found to be in the pay of a foreign State, as for instance Charles II was in the pay of Louis XIV, can any one pretend that the ordinary citizens of Great Britain or America would take it quietly? that any normal man would be found saying: "Well, the King, or the President, or the Prime Minister, is behaving dishonourably, but that is a matter for him, not for me. I am an honest and honourable man, and my Government can do what it likes." The notion is absurd. The ordinary citizen would feel instantly and without question that his country's honour involved his own. And woe to the society in which it were otherwise! We know of such societies in history. They are the kind which is called "corrupt," and which generally has not long to live. Belgium has proved that she is not that kind of society.

But what about Great Britain herself? At the present moment a very clear case has arisen, and we can test our own feelings. Great Britain had, by a solemn treaty more than once renewed, pledged herself to maintain the neutrality of Belgium. Belgium is a little State lying

between two very strong States, France and Germany, and in danger of being overrun or maltreated by one of them unless the Great Powers guarantee her safety. The treaty, signed by Prussia, Russia, Austria, France, and Great Britain, bound all these Powers not to attack Belgium, move troops into her territory, or annex any part of it; and further, to resist by armed force any Power which should try to do any of these things. Belgium, on her part, was bound to maintain her own neutrality to the best of her power, and not to side with any State which was at war with another.

At the end of last July the exact case arose in which we had pledged ourselves to act. Germany suddenly and without excuse invaded Belgium, and Belgium appealed to us and France to defend her. Meantime she fought alone, desperately, against overwhelming odds. The issue was clear, and free from any complications. The German Chancellor, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, in his speech of August 6, admitted that Germany had no grievance against Belgium, and no excuse except "necessity." She could not get to France quick enough by the direct road. Germany put her case to us, roughly, on these grounds. "True, you did sign a treaty, but what is a treaty? We ourselves signed the same treaty, and see what we are doing! Anyhow, treaty or no treaty, we have Belgium absolutely in our power. If she had done what we wanted, we would have treated her kindly; as it is we shall show her no mercy. If you will now do what we want and stay quiet, later on, at our convenience, we will consider a friendly deal with you. If you interfere, you must take the consequences. We trust you will not be so insane as to plunge your whole Empire into danger for the sake of 'a scrap of paper.'" Our

answer was: "Evacuate Belgium within twelve hours or we fight you."

I think that answer was right. Consider the situation carefully. No question arises of overhaste or lack of patience on our part. From the first moment of the crisis, we had laboured night and day in every Court of Europe for any possible means of conciliation and peace. We had carefully and sincerely explained to Germany beforehand what attitude she might expect from us. We did not send our ultimatum till Belgium was already invaded. It is just the plain question put to the British Government, and, I think, to every one who feels himself a British citizen: "The exact case contemplated in your treaty has arisen: the people you swore to protect is being massacred; will you keep your word at a gigantic cost, or will you break it at the bidding of Germany?" For my own part, weighing the whole question soberly and without undue passion, I feel that in this case I would rather die than submit; and I believe that the Government, in deciding to keep its word at the cost of war, has rightly interpreted the feeling of the average British citizen.

So much for the question of honour, pure and simple; honour without regard for consequences. But, of course, situations in real political life are never so simple as that; they have many different aspects and ramifications. And in the present case, though the point of honour happens to be quite clear, it seems probable that even without it there were compelling reasons for war. I do not, of course, for a moment mean that war was going to be "profitable" to Great Britain; such a calculation would be infamous. I mean that, terrible as the conse-

quences of our taking part in the war were sure to be, the consequences of our not doing so were likely to be even more profoundly and widely evil.

Let us leave aside, then, the definite treaty binding us to Belgium. Apart from that, we were faced with a complicated question of statesmanship, of prudence, of patriotism towards our own country and towards humanity.

Germany has for years presented a problem to Europe. Since her defeat of France in 1870, she has been extraordinarily successful, and the success seems to have intoxicated her. This is a complicated subject, which calls for far deeper knowledge than I possess. I will merely try to state, as fairly as I can, the impression that has been forced on me by a certain amount of reading and observation. From the point of view of one who really believes that great nations ought to behave to one another as scrupulously and honourably as ordinary, law-abiding men, no Power in Europe, or out of it, is quite blameless. They all have ambitions; they all, to some extent, use spies; they all, within limits, try to outwit each other; in their diplomatic dealings they rely not only on the claims of good sense and justice, but ultimately, no doubt, on the threat of possible force. But, as a matter of degree, Germany does all these things more than other Powers. In her diplomacy, force comes at once to the front; international justice is hardly mentioned. She spends colossal sums on her secret service, so that German spies are become a by-word and a joke. In the recognized sport of international treachery, she goes frequently beyond the rules of the game. Her Emperor, her Imperial Chancellor, and other people in the highest positions of responsibility, expound

her ambitions and her schemes in language which would only be used by an irresponsible journalist in England or France. They discuss, for instance, whether the time has come for conquering France once more, and how best they can "bleed her white" and reduce her to impotence. They explain that Bismarck and his generation have made Germany the strongest Power on the Continent. "The will of Germany is now respected" in Europe; it rests with the present Emperor to make it similarly respected throughout the world. "Germany's world-future lies on the sea." They discuss whether they can build up a fleet strong enough to fight and beat the British fleet without Great Britain interfering. They discuss in public how many colonies, and which, they will leave to Great Britain when the great "Day" comes. They express regret, combined, so far as one can make out, with a little genuine surprise, that the "brutal egoism of Great Britain" should raise any objection to this plan and they hope — openly and publicly — that her well-known weakness and cowardice will make her afraid to act. Since Great Britain has a vast number of Mohammedan subjects, who may possibly be stirred to disaffection, the German Emperor proclaims to "the three hundred million Mohammedans who live scattered over the globe" that whenever they need him, the German Emperor will be their friend. And this in 1898, in the middle of profound peace! Professors in German Universities lecture on the best way of destroying the British Empire, and the officers' messes in the German Navy regularly drink the toast of "The Day." There is no need to explain what Day. The curious thing is that these plans are all expounded in public speeches and books — strange books, in which the average civilized

sense of international justice or common honesty seems to have been left out of account, as well as the sense of common political prudence; in which the schemes of an accomplished burglar are expounded with the candour of a child.

And all through this period, in which she plots against her neighbours and tells them she is plotting, Germany lives in a state of alarm. Her neighbours are so unfriendly! Their attitude may be correct, but it is not trustful and cordial. The Imperial Chancellor, Von Bülow, explains in his book that there was only one time when he really breathed freely. It was in 1909, when Austria, his ally, annexed by violence and against her pledges the two Slav provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. All Europe was indignant, especially Russia, the natural protector of the Slavs, and England, the habitual champion of small nationalities. But Germany put down her foot. The Kaiser "appeared in shining armour beside his ally," and no Power dared to intervene. Germany was in the wrong. Every one knew she was in the wrong. It was just that fact that was so comforting. Her army was big enough, her navy was big enough, and for the moment the timid creature felt secure.

Lastly, we must remember that it is Germany who started the race for armaments; and that while Russia has pressed again and again for a general limitation of armies, and England made proposal after proposal for a general limitation of navies, Germany has steadily refused to entertain any such idea.

Now, for some time it was possible to minimize all these danger-signals, and, for my own part, I have always tried to minimize them. There are militarists and

Jingoes in every country; our own have often been bad enough. The German sort seemed unusually blatant, but it did not follow that they carried their country with them. The Kaiser, always impulsive, said on the whole more friendly things than unfriendly things. At any rate, it seemed wiser and more statesmanlike to meet provocation with good temper, and to try by persistent friendliness to encourage all the more liberal and reasonable elements in German public life. This policy seemed possible until the July of the present year. Then certain facts were forced upon us. They are all detailed in the White Paper and the other diplomatic correspondence.

We suddenly found that Germany and Austria, or some conspiring parties in Germany and Austria, had arranged for a great stroke, like that of 1909 on a larger scale. It was so obviously aggressive in its nature that their ally, Italy, the third Power in the Triple Alliance, formally refused to act with them. The Alliance only applied to a defensive war. The time had been carefully chosen. England was supposed to be on the verge of a civil war in Ireland and a new mutiny in India. France had just been through a military scandal, in which it appeared that the army was short of boots and ammunition. Russia, besides a general strike and internal troubles, was re-arming her troops with a new weapon, and the process was only half through. Even the day was chosen. It was in a week when nearly all the ambassadors were away from their posts, taking their summer holiday — the English Ambassador at Berlin, the Russian Ambassadors at Berlin and Vienna, the Austrian Foreign Minister, the French Prime Minister, the Serbian Prime Minister, the Kaiser himself,

and others who might have used a restraining influence on the schemes of the war party. Suddenly, without a word to any outside Power, Austria issued an ultimatum to Serbia, to be answered in forty-eight hours. Seventeen of these hours had elapsed before the other Powers were informed, and war was declared on Serbia before all the ambassadors could get back to their posts. The leading statesmen of Europe sat up all night trying for conciliation, for arbitration, even for bare delay. At the last moment, when the Austrian Foreign Minister had returned, and had consented to a basis for conversations with Russia, there seemed to be a good chance that peace might be preserved; but at that moment Germany launched her ultimatum at Russia and France, and Austria was already invading Serbia. In twenty-four hours, six European Powers were at war.

Now, the secret history of this strange intrigue is not yet known. It will not be known for fifty years or so. It is impossible to believe that the German nation would have backed up the plot, if they had understood it. It is difficult to think that the Kaiser would; and the Austrian Foreign Minister, when once he returned, tried to undo the work of his subordinates. But somehow the war parties in Germany and Austria got the upper hand for one fatal week, and have managed to drag their countries after them.

We saw, as Italy had seen, that Germany had prearranged the war. We saw her breaking her treaties and overrunning little Belgium, as her ally was trampling on little Serbia. We remembered her threats against ourselves. And at this very time, as if to deepen our suspicions, she made us what has been justly termed an "infamous proposal," that if we would condone her

treaty-breaking now, she would have an "understanding" with us afterwards.

Suppose we had not been bound by our treaty to Belgium, or even our natural and informal friendship with France: what could we have done? I wish to take no low ground; I wish to face the question from the point of view of a statesman who owes a duty to his own country and a duty to Europe.

The one thing which we could not have done, in my opinion, was to repudiate our responsibility. We are a very strong Power, one of the strongest in the world, and here, under our eyes and within range of our guns, a thing was being done which menaced every living creature in Europe. The one thing that no statesman could possibly do was to say: "This is no concern of ours. We will go our ways as usual." It was perfectly possible to stand aside and proclaim our neutrality. But — apart from questions of honour — to proclaim neutrality was quite as grave a step as to proclaim war. Let no man imagine that he can escape blood-guiltiness by standing still while murder is committed before his eyes.

I will not argue here what the right decision would have been. It depends, unlike the point of honour, on a careful balancing of evidence and consequences, and scarcely any one in the country except the Government has sufficient knowledge to make the balance. For my own part, I should have started with a strong predilection for peace, even a fragmentary peace, but should ultimately have been guided chiefly by the public men whom I most trust. But, as things fell out, our Government was not forced to make a decision on this difficult

ground at all, because Germany took a further step which made the whole situation clear. Her treatment of Belgium not only roused our passionate indignation, but compelled us either to declare war or to break our pledged word. I incline, however, to think that our whole welfare is so vitally dependent on the observance of public law and the rights of nations, and would have been so terribly endangered by the presence of Germany in a conqueror's mood at Ostend and Zeebrugge, not to speak of Dunkirk and Calais, that in this case mere self-preservation called us to fight. I do not venture to lay any stress on the hopes which we may entertain for the building up of a better Europe after the war, a Europe which shall have settled its old feuds and devised some great machinery for dealing with new difficulties as they arise, on a basis of justice and concord, not of intrigue and force. By all means let us hope, let us work, for that rebuilding; but it will be a task essentially difficult when it comes; and the very beginning of it lies far away, separated from the present time and the immediate task by many terrific hazards. We have no right to soothe our consciences concerning the war with professions of the fine and generous things that we are going to do afterwards. Doubtless Germany was going to make us all good and happy when she was once sure of our obedience. For the moment we can think only of our duty, and need of self-preservation. And I believe that in this matter the two run together: our interest coincides with our honour.

It is curious how often this is the case. It is one of the old optimistic beliefs of nineteenth-century Liberalism, and one which is often ridiculed, that a nation's

duty generally does coincide with its interest. No doubt one can find abundant exceptions, but I believe that in the main, for nations as for individuals, real palpable conscious dishonesty or wickedness is exceedingly unprofitable. This is a more interesting fact than it looks at first sight.

There are many poisons which are simply so nasty that, undisguised, they cannot be swallowed. No power could induce a man or dog to sip or lap a tablespoonful of nicotine or prussic acid. You might coax the dog with future bones, you might persuade the man that the medicine was just what his health needed; but their swallowing muscles would refuse to act. Doubtless, in the scheme of nature, the disgust is a provision which saves the race. Now I cannot help suspecting that, much more faintly and more fallibly, the vehement and invincible refusal with which man's sense of honour or religion meets certain classes of proposal, which look profitable enough on the surface, is just such another warning of nature against poison. In all these cases discussed above, the Christian's martyrdom, the honourable man's refusal to desert his companions, it was not true to say, as we seemed to say, that advantage was on one side and honour on the other. Dishonour would have brought with it a subtler and more lasting disadvantage, greater in its sum than immediate death. If the Christian had sacrificed to the idol, what would his life have been afterwards? Perhaps his friends would have rejected his example and been martyred; he would be alone in his shame. Perhaps they would have followed his example, and through him the whole band of the "faithful" have betrayed Christ. Not a very enviable choice either way. Without any tall talk or high pro-

fessions, would it not quite certainly be better for the whole Church and probably for the man himself that he should defy his persecutors and die? And does not the same now hold for any patriotic Belgian or Serbian who has had a voice in his country's action? The choice was not on the one hand honour and misery, on the other dishonour and a happy life. It was on the one hand honour and great physical suffering, on the other hand dishonour and a life subtly affected by that dishonour in a thousand unforeseen ways. I do not underrate the tremendous importance of mere physical suffering; I do not underrate the advantage of living as long a life as is conveniently possible. But men must die some time, and, if we dare really to confess the truth, the thing that most of us in our hearts long for, the thing which either means ultimate happiness or else is greater and dearer to men than happiness, is the power to do our duty and, when we die, to have done it. The behaviour of our soldiers and sailors proves it. "*The last I saw of him was on the after bridge, doing well.*" The words come in the official report made by the captain of one of our lost cruisers. But that is the kind of epitaph nearly all men crave for themselves, and the wisest men, I think, even for their nation.

And if we accept this there will follow further consequences. War is not all evil. It is a true tragedy, which must have nobleness and triumph in it as well as disaster. . . . This is dangerous ground. The subject lends itself to foolish bombast, especially when accompanied by a lack of true imagination. We must not begin to praise war without stopping to reflect on the hundreds of thousands of human beings involved in such horrors

of pain and indignity that, if here in our ordinary hours we saw one man so treated, the memory would sicken us to the end of our lives; we must remember the horses, remember the gentle natures brutalized by hardship and filth, and the once decent persons transformed by rage and fear into devils of cruelty. But, when we have realized that, we may venture to see in this wilderness of evil some oases of extraordinary good.

These men who are engaged in what seems like a vast public crime ought, one would think, to fall to something below their average selves, below the ordinary standard of common folk. But do they? Day after day come streams of letters from the front, odd stories, fragments of diaries, and the like, full of the small, intimate facts which reveal character; and almost with one accord they show that these men have not fallen, but risen. No doubt there has been some selection in the letters; to some extent the writers repeat what they wish to have remembered, and say nothing of what they wish to forget. But, when all allowances are made, one cannot read the letters and the dispatches without a feeling of almost passionate admiration for the men about whom they tell. They were not originally a set of men chosen for their peculiar qualities. They were just our ordinary fellow citizens, the men you meet on a crowded pavement. There was nothing to suggest that their conduct in common life was better than that of their neighbours. Yet now, under the stress of war, having a duty before them that is clear and unquestioned and terrible, they are daily doing nobler things than we most of us have ever had the chance of doing, things which we hardly dare hope that we might be able to do. I am not thinking of the rare achievements that win a V.C. or a Cross

of the Legion of Honour, but of the common necessary heroism of the average men: the long endurance, the devoted obedience, the close-banded life in which self-sacrifice is the normal rule, and all men may be forgiven except the man who saves himself at the expense of his comrade. I think of the men who share their last biscuits with a starving peasant, who help wounded comrades through days and nights of horrible retreat, who give their lives to save mates or officers.[1] Or I think again

[1] For example, to take two stories out of a score: —

1. Relating his experiences to a pressman, Lance-Corporal Edmondson, of the Royal Irish Lancers, said: "There is absolutely no doubt that our men are still animated by the spirit of old. I came on a couple of men of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders who had been cut off at Mons. One was badly wounded, but his companion had stuck by him all the time in a country swarming with Germans, and though they had only a few biscuits between them they managed to pull through until we picked them up. I pressed the unwounded man to tell me how they managed to get through the four days on six biscuits, but he always got angry and told me to shut up. I fancy he went without anything, and gave the biscuits to the wounded man. They were offered shelter many times by French peasants, but they were so afraid of bringing trouble on these kind folk that they would never accept shelter. One night they lay out in the open all through a heavy downpour, though there was a house at hand where they could have had shelter. Uhlans were on the prowl, and they would not think of compromising the French people, who would have been glad to help them."

2. The following story of an unidentified private of the Royal Irish Regiment, who deliberately threw away his life in order to warn his comrades of an ambush, is told by a wounded corporal of the West Yorkshire Regiment now in hospital in Woolwich: —

"The fight in which I got hit was in a little village near to Rheims. We were working in touch with the French corps on our left, and early one morning we were sent ahead to this village, which we had reason to believe was clear of the enemy. On the outskirts we questioned a French lad, but he seemed scared and ran away. We went on through the long, narrow street, and just as we were in sight of the end the figure of a man dashed out from a farmhouse on the right. Immediately the rifles began to crack in front, and the poor chap fell dead before he reached us.

"He was one of our men, a private of the Royal Irish Regiment. We learned that he had been captured the previous day by a marauding party of German cavalry, and had been held a prisoner at the

of the expressions on faces that I have seen or read about, something alert and glad and self-respecting in the eyes of those who are going to the front, and even of the wounded who are returning. "Never once," writes one correspondent, "not once since I came to France have I seen among the soldiers an angry face or heard an angry word. . . . They are always quiet, orderly, and wonderfully cheerful." And no one who has followed the war need be told of their heroism. I do not forget the thousands left on the battlefield to die, or the groaning of the wounded sounding all day between the crashes of the guns. But there is a strange deep gladness as well. "One feels an extraordinary freedom," says a young Russian officer, "in the midst of death, with the bullets whistling round. The same with all the soldiers. The wounded all want to get well and return to the fight. They fight with tears of joy in their eyes."

Human nature is a mysterious thing, and man finds his weal and woe not in the obvious places. To have something before you, clearly seen, which you know you must do, and can do, and will spend your utmost strength and perhaps your life in doing, that is one form at least of very high happiness, and one that appeals — the facts prove it — not only to saints and heroes, but to average men. Doubtless the few who are wise enough

farm where the Germans were in ambush for us. He tumbled to their game, and though he knew that if he made the slightest sound they would kill him, he decided to make a dash to warn us of what was in store. He had more than a dozen bullets in him, and there was not the slightest hope for him. We carried him into a house until the fight was over, and then we buried him next day with military honours. His identification disk and everything else was missing, so that we could only put over his grave the tribute that was paid to a greater: 'He saved others; himself he could not save.' There was n't a dry eye among us when we laid him to rest in that little village."

and have enough imagination may find opportunity for that same happiness in everyday life, but in war ordinary men find it. This is the inward triumph which lies at the heart of the great tragedy.

III

HERD INSTINCT AND THE WAR[1]

(February, 1915)

At the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, close to the entrance, you can buy for the sum of fourpence a most fascinating little book on "The Fossil Remains of Man." It is official and, I presume, authoritative. And it tells how, in very remote times, before there was any South Kensington Museum, or any England, or, I believe, in the strict sense, any Europe, there lived in swampy forests in various parts of the world, troops of little lemur-like tree-dwellers. They were, I suppose, rather like small monkeys, but much prettier. They had nice fur, good prehensile tails, and effective teeth. Then there fell upon them, or some of them, a momentous change, a hypertrophy or overdevelopment of one part of the body. This kind of special increase, the author tells us, seldom stops till it becomes excessive. With the lemurs it was the brain which began to grow. It grew and grew, both in size and in complexity. The rest of the body suffered in consequence. The fur became mangy and disappeared. The prehensile tails wasted away. The teeth ceased to be useful as weapons. And in the end, ladies and gentlemen, after incalculable ages, here we are!

Now these lemurs had certain instincts and habits of life. Let us define our terms. By an instinct I mean,

[1] Lecture at Bedford College.

following the exposition of Dr. McDougall, an innate psycho-physical disposition to notice objects of a certain class, to feel about them in certain ways and to act correspondingly. They would notice an enemy, hate him, and spit at him; notice an object that was good to eat, desire it, and eat it. They made love, they protected their young, they defended their group against other groups. And primitive man inherited, with modifications, their instincts, and we have similarly inherited his. Some of them were generally desirable, and are consequently admitted and encouraged; others were generally undesirable, and have been habitually denied and suppressed in our conscious life, only to break out in dreams, in fits of insanity or passion, or more subtly in self-deception. But, suppressed or unsuppressed, man's instincts form the normal motive force in his life, though the direction of that force may from time to time be controlled by conscious reason.

From this point of view I wish to consider what has happened to us in England since August 4, 1914. For that something has happened is quite clear. There is an inward change, which some people praise and some blame. There is a greater seriousness in life, less complaining, less obvious selfishness, and more hardihood. There is a universal power of self-sacrifice whose existence we never suspected before: on every side young men are ready to go and face death for their country, and parents are ready to let them go. There is more brotherhood and more real democracy; and at the same time, a quality of which we stood in much need, far more discipline and obedience.

This makes a very strong case on the good side. Yet,

on the other, you will find generally that reformers and idealists are disheartened. Friends of peace, of women's causes, of legal reform, of the mitigation of cruelty to animals, are all reduced to something like impotence. One hears the statement that "there is no Christianity left." The very increase of power and devotion which has occurred is directed, so some say, to the service of evil. The same process has taken place in Germany, and has there apparently reached a higher degree of intensity. To leave aside its more insane manifestations, a Danish friend sends me the following quotation from a German religious poet, much admired in evangelical circles: "We have become the nation of wrath. . . . We accomplish the almighty will of God, and will vengefully wreak the demands of His righteousness on the godless, filled with sacred fury. . . . We are bound together like a scourge of punishment whose name is War. We flame like lightning. Our wounds blossom like rose-gardens at the gate of heaven. Thanks be to Thee, God Almighty! Thy wrathful awakening does away with our sins. As the iron in Thy hand we smite all our enemies on the cheek-bone." Another poet, a clergyman, prays that the Germans may not fall into the temptation of carrying out the judgements of God's wrath with too great mildness. Now the state of mind which these poems reveal — and I dare say they could be paralleled or nearly paralleled in England — is compatible with great self-sacrifice and heroism, but it is certainly not what one would call wholesome.

In order to understand this change as a whole, it is necessary to analyze it; and I would venture to suggest that, in the main, it consists simply in an immense stimulation of the herd or group instincts, though, of course,

other instincts are also involved. For the present, let us neither praise nor blame, but simply analyze. At the end we may have some conclusion to draw.

Man is by nature a gregarious animal and is swayed by herd instincts, as a gregarious animal must be; but of course they are greatly modified. Outside mankind we find these instincts in various grades of development. They show strongest in ants and bees, with their communal life of utter self-sacrifice, utter ruthlessness. I see that Professor Julian Huxley, in his book on "The Individual in the Animal Kingdom," doubts whether among ants the single ant or the whole ant-heap is really the individual. I remember a traveller in northern Australia narrating how he once saw a procession of white ants making towards his camp, and to head them off sprinkled across their line of advance a train of bluestone, or sulphate of copper. And instead of turning aside, each ant as he came up threw himself on the horribly corrosive stuff and devoured it till he fell dead; and presently the main army marched on over a line consisting no longer of bluestone, but of dead ants.

The instinct is less overpowering in cattle, horses, wolves, etc. Certain wild cattle in South Africa are taken by Galton as types of it. In ordinary herd life they show no interest in one another, much less any mutual affection. But if one is taken out of the herd and put by himself he pines, and when he is taken back to the herd he shoves and nozzles to the very centre of it. Wolves, again, will fight for their pack, but not from mutual affection. If the pack is not threatened, they will readily fight and kill one another. A dog in domesticated conditions is especially interesting. He has been taken away

from his pack, but he retains his fundamental habits. He barks to call his mates on every emergency, even if barking frightens his prey away. He sniffs at everything when he is out walking, because he has wanted so long to find his way home to the lost pack. His real pack is now artificial, grouped round his master. It will take in his master's friends and house-companions, including quite possibly various animals such as cats and rabbits. Meantime he rejects the strange man and cheerfully kills the strange cat or rabbit. His delightful friendliness and sympathy are of course due to his herd habits. A cat has no herd. She has always "walked alone."

Now man satisfies his herd instinct by many groups, mainly artificial. Like the dog, he may take in other animals. In ordinary life the group of which he is most conscious is his social class, especially if it is threatened in any way. Clergymen, landowners, teachers, coal-miners tend, as the phrase is, to hang together. They have the same material interests and the same habits of life. Again, there may be local groups, counties or villages, or groups dependent on ideas and beliefs, a church, a party in politics, a clique in art. But of all groups, far the strongest when it is once roused is the nation, and it is the nation that is roused now.

Normally men of science form a group, so do theologians. But now they feel no longer as men of science or theologians, they feel as Englishmen or Germans. I see that the Archbishop of Munich has expressed a doubt whether "any appreciable number of Belgian priests" have been "irregularly killed" by German soldiers. There is an absence of class feeling about this remark which few clergymen could attain in peace time. I see that even the German Jesuits are sharply differing from

the rest of the Jesuits, an order famous throughout history for its extreme cohesion and discipline. The only bodies that have at all asserted themselves against the main current of feeling in the various nations have been a few isolated Intellectuals and some small groups of International Socialists. It was easier for these last, since with them Internationalism was not only a principle, but a habit, and, besides, they were accustomed in ordinary life to be against their own government and to differ from their neighbours.

In the main, what has happened is very simple. In all wild herds we find that the strength of this instinct depends upon the need for it. As soon as the herd is in danger, the herd instinct flames up in passion to defend it. The members of the herd first gather together, and then fight or fly. This is what has happened to us. Our herd is in danger, and our natural herd instinct is aflame. Let us notice certain different ways in which it operates.

First, the herd unites. Wolves who are quarrelling cease when menaced by a common enemy. Cattle and horses draw together. We in England find ourselves a band of brothers; and the same of course occurs in Germany. Indeed, it probably occurs even more strongly there, since all herd emotions there tend to be passionately expressed and officially encouraged. Those who are ordinarily separate have drawn together. Canada, Australia, India, even Crown colonies like Fiji, seem to be feeling a common emotion. A year or so ago one might see in the advertisements of employment in Canadian newspapers the words, "No English need apply." You would not find them now. Even the United States have drawn close to us. Of course in part

this is due to the goodness of our cause, to sympathy with the wrongs of Belgium, and the like. Most neutrals are somewhat on our side. But herd instinct is clearly present; or why do the German-Americans side with the Germans?

Even those who are ordinarily at strife have drawn together. Before the war our whole people seemed at strife with itself, how far from natural causes and how far from definite intrigue on the part of Germany history will doubtless show. We had the Militant Suffragists, we had an utterly extraordinary number of strikes and a great deal of rebellion against trade-union leaders, we had trouble in India, terrific threats in Ireland. And on the whole, now these various enemies have "made it up." Of course it was much harder for them than for those who were merely separated by distance. There were serious obstacles in the way; habits of anger, habits of suspicion; often the mere routine of party attack which comes natural to small groups in strong opposition to a government. As a journalist said to me: "I mostly keep the truce all right; but sometimes, when one is tired and has nothing particular to say, one drops into abusing McKenna."

The chief problem that arises in this general drawing together is the problem of fidelity to the lesser herd. Sometimes there is no clash between the lesser and the greater. A man's emotion towards his family, his associates, his native district, causes as a rule no clash. On the contrary, it is usually kindled and strengthened by some sort of analogy or some emotional infection. The emotions of loyalty, of love to one's neighbours and surroundings, are all stirred; and the family emotions in particular, being themselves very ancient and deep-

rooted in our instinctive nature, have grown stronger together with those of the herd.

But often there is a clash. For instance, an individual who has recently been in Germany and made close friends there will, out of loyalty to this friendship, rebel against the current anti-German passion, and so become "pro-German." I mean by "pro-German," not one who wishes the Germans to win, — I know of none such, — but one who habitually interprets doubtful questions in a way sympathetic to Germany. Again, there are a few people who, on one ground or another, disapproved of the declaration of war. They are attacked and maligned: their friends naturally stand by them. The whole group hits back angrily and becomes, in the same sense, pro-German. Then there are people who are influenced by a peculiar form of pugnacity which is often miscalled "love of justice." It is really a habit of irritation at excess which finds vent not in justice, but in counter-excess. "So-and-so is overpraised; for Heaven's sake, let us bring him down a peg! Every fool I meet is emotionalized about the German treatment of Belgium; can we not somehow — somehow — show that no harm was done, or that Belgium deserved it, or at least that it was all the fault of the Russians?" People of these types and others form, some generous and some perverse, both here and in Germany, a protesting small herd in reaction against the great herd. Thus the herd draws together, though lesser and protesting herds within it may do the same.

Secondly, in time of danger the individual subordinates himself to the herd. He ceases to make claims upon it, he desires passionately to serve it. He is miserable

and unsatisfied if there is no public work found for him. Discipline consequently becomes easy and automatic. I know of one case where a number of recruits in a certain new regiment were drawn from a local trade union of pugnacious traditions. One of them was punished for something or other. The rest instinctively proposed to strike, but even as they proposed it found themselves in the grip of a stronger instinct. They hesitated for an instant and then obeyed orders. Again, I seem to have noticed that there is in most people an active desire to be ordered about. We like a drill-sergeant to speak to us severely, much as you speak to a dog which has not yet been naughty but looks as if he meant to be. In ordinary life, when a man has to obey and submit, he feels small. The action is accompanied by what Mr. McDougall calls "negative self-feeling." But now, it seems, we actually have a sense of pride when we are ordered about. It makes us feel that we are really serving.

We may notice here a curious side-movement, a counter-action to the main stream making for union. Such counter-actions are, of course, always to be expected and need cause no surprise. Why is it that, among these great steady forces of union and mutual trust, we have sudden flashes of the very opposite, especially of wild suspicions of the herd-leaders? I do not mean mere spy-mania. That is simple enough, a morbid excess of a perfectly natural feeling directed against the common enemy. You desire passionately to capture a real German spy; and, since you cannot find one, you make up a bogus one and capture him. I mean a similar mania, though much weaker and rarer, directed against the herd itself: the semi-insane suspicions of Prince Louis of Battenberg, of Lord Haldane, and of persons

even more exalted. Partly, these impulses are the remains of old quarrels in feeble minds. But partly they have a real biological origin. For while, in ordinary dangers, the safety of the future race depends on the individuals serving and trusting their herd, there are moments when the only chance of safety lies in their deserting and rejecting it. If once the herd is really conquered and in the power of the enemy, then the cry must be "*Sauve qui peut*," and the panic which is generally disastrous is now a protection. Thus these small cases of panic, though practically unimportant, are psychologically interesting and have their proper evolutionist explanation.

So far we have found, first, that the herd draws together, and next, that the individual subordinates himself to the herd. Thirdly, it seems clear that this closer herd union has an effect upon the emotions, and a twofold effect. As all readers of psychology know, herd union intensifies all the emotions which are felt in common. The effect is so strong and so striking that some writers have treated it as a kind of mystery and described it in language that is almost mythological. But there does not seem to be anything inexplicable in the matter. Emotion is infectious. Each member of a herd which is in the grasp of some emotion is himself in a "suggestible" state and is also exerting "suggestion" upon his neighbours. They are all directly stimulating his emotion and he theirs. And doubtless we should also remember that, herd emotion being itself a very old and deep-rooted animal affection, its stimulation has probably a sympathetic effect on all kinds of similar disturbances, such as fear and anger and animal desires of various sorts.

Furthermore, herd union often gives the suppressed subconscious forces their chance of satisfaction. Hence come the atrocities committed by crowds. Some dormant desire, existing in your nature but normally suppressed, is suddenly encouraged by suggestion. You see a look in your neighbour's face, and he in yours; and in a flash you both know what that look means. You dare to own a feeling which, in your normal condition, you would have strangled unborn. Suppressed instinct calls to instinct across the gulf of personality, and the infamous thing is half done. For the herd, besides tempting you, also offers you a road of impunity. You can repudiate responsibility afterwards. It is never exactly you that really did the thing. It is the crowd that did it, and the crowd has now ceased to exist. M. Lenôtre, in his studies of the French Revolution, has commented on the somewhat ghastly fact that in moments of herd excitement people on the verge of lunacy, people touched by persecution mania, by suspicion mania, by actual homicidal mania, are apt to become leaders and inspire confidence. The same phenomenon has been noticed in certain revolutionary movements in Russia.

In England, fortunately, there has been so far almost no field for this kind of dangerous herd excitement. There has been of course some ferocity in speech, a comparatively harmless safety-valve for bad feelings, and in some persons a preferable alternative to apoplexy; but no violent actions and, I think, among decent people, extraordinarily little vindictiveness.

But herd union does not intensify all emotions. It intensifies those which are felt in common, but it actually deadens and shuts down those which are only felt by the individual. The herd is, as a matter of fact, habitually

callous towards the sufferings of its individual members, and it infects each member with its own callousness. To take a trifling instance, a friend writes to me thus: "I discovered one day on a march that my boot was hurting me; after an hour or so it became obvious that my foot was bleeding. In ordinary times I should have made a fuss and insisted on sympathy, and certainly not gone on walking for several miles. But as it was, moving in a steady mass of people who were uninterested in my boots, and I in theirs, I marched on without making any remark or even feeling much."

The ramifications of this herd callousness are very curious and intricate. It acts even with fear, that most contagious of emotions. The herd deadens the fears of the individual so long as they do not become real herd fears. Untrained troops will advance in close masses. It needs good troops to advance individually in open order. The close masses are much more dangerous and the open order less so, but in the close mass the herd is all round you, buttressing you and warming you, and it deadens your private fear. It may also be that there is here some hereditary instinct at work, derived from a time when the act of huddling together was a real protection, as it is with sheep and cattle attacked by wolves.

If this herd callousness acts with fear, it acts of course far more with scruples or pities. The first scruple or ruth or criticism of the herd must rise in the breast of some individual. If, by good luck, at the same moment it occurs to some dozen other men, it has a chance of asserting itself. Otherwise there is only the single unit standing up, in his infinite weakness, against the great herd. The scruple is silenced and dies.

Of course, in actual warfare this callousness is im-

mensely increased by the nature of the work which the combatants are doing, and the immense change in their habitual standard of expectation. You cannot always be pitying people, or you would never get on with your business. A friend of mine, a clever and kindly man, told me how he and his men, after a long spell in the trenches, utterly tired and chilled and dropping with sleep, had at last got into their billets — a sort of warm cellar where they could just squeeze in. They heard the scream of shrapnel sweeping the street outside, and some soldiers of another regiment and nationality ran up to the door begging for admittance and shelter. With one voice, so my friend said, he and his men growled at them and slammed the door in their faces. It was their own cellar, and these people were intruders. And they shut them out into the shrapnel much as, in ordinary circumstances, they would perhaps have felt justified in shutting them out into the rain. The strangest development of all is perhaps the disregard of the herd for its wounded, and the readiness of the wounded themselves to be so disregarded. Of course there are abundant cases of the opposite sort, where individuals show the utmost regard for the wounded, risk their lives for them, and count no labour too hard for their sake. But I have certainly met with well-authenticated stories, notably of incidents in the German and Japanese and Turkish armies, which seem to take one back to some rather primitive instincts. The true animal herd hates its wounded and kills them; cattle, wolves, porpoises, every herd of gregarious animals does the same. Of course it hates them. They not only tend to hamper its movements, but they present vividly to its eyes and senses the very thing that it most loathes — its own

blood and pain. And one finds also curious instances where the wounded man himself is so absorbed in the general herd emotion that he insists, even angrily, on being left alone.

Thus, under the influence of herd union, common emotions are intensified, individual emotions deadened.

Now thought, unlike emotion, is markedly individual and personal. It is not infectious. It is communicated by articulate language. The herd growls, cries, sobs, sometimes laughs; but it finds speech very difficult. Again, thought is critical, and the herd wants unanimity, not criticism. Consequently herd union deadens thought.

True, the herd leader must think and plan, and the herd will obey him. In an organized army, where discipline and organization powerfully counteract many of the normal herd characteristics, thought sits enthroned and directs the whole mass. But it is a special kind of thought, under central control and devoted simply to attaining the purposes of the herd. Other thought is inhibited.

For instance, if the herd is angry, it is quite simply angry with another herd. This state of mind is normal among savages and primitive men. Some one belonging to a tribe over the river has speared one of our cows, therefore we catch some other person belonging to a different tribe over the river and club him on the head. Herd justice is satisfied. It only sees things in herds. "The Germans" did so-and-so; therefore punish "the Germans": "the English" did so-and-so; therefore punish "the English." Whenever a herd is offended by some action, it is made happy by punishing as dramatically as possible several people who did not do it. Collective anger, collective punishment, is always opposed to

justice, because justice applies only to individuals. And again, the more angry a herd is, the less evidence it needs that there is due cause for its anger. Accuse a man of some irregularity in his accounts, and the herd will expect to have the charge duly proved. But accuse him of having drenched little girls in paraffin and set fire to them, and the herd will very likely tear him — or some one else — to pieces at once without further evidence.

By this process of killing out thought the herd sinks all its members in itself and assimilates them to an average. And this average is in some ways above but in most considerably below that of the average man in normal life. For it is that of the average man not thinking but merely feeling. Only the leader has the function of thinking; hence his enormous and uncanny power.

Lastly, let us consider the effect of this herd union on religion. At first sight the answer would seem simple. Religion is a network of primitive collective emotions, and any stimulus which works upon such emotions is likely, by force of sympathy, to rouse religious emotion at the same time. At any rate some of the causes which have recently roused herd emotion in Europe are just the causes on which religious emotion is often said to be based. Man has been made to feel the presence of terrific forces over which he has no control. He has been taught, crudely and violently, his dependence on the unknown. On this line of reasoning, the religious life of the world should be greatly intensified. Yet there are serious considerations leading to the opposite conclusion. A world so mad and evil, however terrific, can hardly seem like the mirror in which to see God. I remember a dreadful incident in one of the consular reports of the Armenian

massacres of 1895. At that time the universal dread and horror throughout Armenia sent most people praying day and night in the churches. But the report tells of one woman who sat by the road and refused to pray. "Do you not see what has happened?" she said. "God has gone mad. It is no use to pray to Him." I have myself talked on different days to two soldiers who gave vivid accounts of the hideous proceedings of the war in Flanders and of their own feelings of terror. Their accounts agreed, but the conclusions they drew were different. One man ended by saying with a sort of gasp: "It made you believe in God, I can tell you." The other, a more thoughtful man, said: "It made you doubt the existence of God." I think that the effect of this year of history will be to discourage the higher kind of religion and immensely strengthen the lower.

Let me try to analyze this conclusion more closely, and see what we mean in this context by "higher" and "lower." I hope that most of my hearers will agree with me, or at least not disagree violently, in assuming that the attributes which a man ascribes to his God are conditioned by his own mind, its limitations and its direction. I could, if necessary, quote at least one Father of the Church in support of such a view. Thus the God whom a man worships is in some form a projection of his own personality. The respective Gods of a seventeenth-century Puritan, a Quaker, an Arab, a South-Sea Islander, will all differ as their worshippers differ, and the human qualities attributed to each will be projections of the emotions of the worshipper. Thus, the lower, and often the more passionate, religion will be directed towards a God who is a projection of the worshipper's own terrors and angers and desires and selfishness. The

higher religion weaves its conception of God more out of its duties and its aspirations. To one of those soldiers whom I mentioned above God was evidently a Being of pure terror, fitly mirrored by the action of a host of high-explosive shells. To many people in great oppression, again, God is almost an incarnation of their desire for revenge: let those who doubt it read the history of persecution. To others, an incarnation of Self. Some of you will have seen Mr. Dyson's finely tragic cartoon entitled "Alone with his God." It represents the Kaiser kneeling, a devout and fully armed figure, before another Kaiser exactly the same in dress and feature, but gigantic, august, enthroned amid the incense of ruined towns and burning churches, blindly staring and inexpressibly sad. It is a picture to ponder on.

All these emotions, the self-worship, the hate, the revenge, the terror, will be stimulated, and so will the kind of religion that depends on them. The higher religion, of which it is less easy to speak, which expresses itself in the love of righteousness, in the sense of one's own imperfection, in the aspiration after a better life and a world with more love in it . . . that sort of religion, I fear, will chiefly come in reaction. It cannot be the main flood. There is too much reflection in it, too much inhibition. The main flood of herd emotion will sweep over it for the time being, but it will not die. There is a strange life in the things of the spirit.

I suggested at the beginning of this very rough and sketchy analysis that perhaps at the end we might be able to pass some definite moral judgement on the change which has taken place in us, and say whether it is a good or a bad change. But I fear that the suggestion

has not been realized. Herd instinct in itself is neither good nor bad. It is simply part of the stuff of life, an immense store of vitality out of which both good and evil, extreme good and extreme evil, can spring.

Thus it is impossible to say without qualification that we ought to rejoice in this stimulation of our herd instincts or that we ought rigorously to master and reject it. Neither alternative is sufficient. We must do this and not leave the other undone. We must accept gladly the quickened pulse, the new strength and courage, the sense of brotherhood, the spirit of discipline and self-sacrifice. All these things make life a finer thing. It is nothing against a particular emotion that mankind shares it with the ape and the tiger. Gorillas are famous for their family life, and tigresses are, up to their lights, exemplary mothers. As regards herd feeling in particular, we should realize that even in its most unthinking forms it generally makes a man kinder and more trustworthy towards his immediate neighbours and daily associates; the evil side of it comes into play much more rarely, since it is directed against the far-off alien herd which is seldom met or seen.

And lastly, we should remember one piece of certain knowledge which is both immensely important and very difficult to apply: that thwarted instincts act like poison in human nature, and a normal and temperate satisfaction of instinct is what keeps it sweet and sane. At the present time, for instance, the people whose minds have turned sour and vicious are almost always those who can neither fight nor serve. The fighters and doctors and nurses and public servants — as a rule their herd desire is satisfied, and they do their work with fervour and without bitterness.

Yet, after all, we are thinking beings. If we acknowledge our instincts, we need not worship them. Thinking itself is both an instinct and a form of public service, and it is our business to watch ourselves. We must see that this fresh force which we feel within us is not wrongly directed, and that the higher and gentler elements of life are not swamped by this new strong wine. Millions of men throughout Europe are, without stint or question, offering all that is in them to the service of their countries and the command of their leaders. We must see, so far as lies in our power, that we do not abuse that heroic blindness. And, among us who remain at home, we must see as far as possible that the normal texture of life is not lowered or coarsened.

There has been current in England of recent years a reaction against reason, an avowed worship of instinct and tradition and even prejudice. The doctrines of this reaction are in themselves fascinating, and they have been preached by fascinating writers. The way of instinct and old habit is so full of ease, so facile and strong and untroubled. Look at the faces of men who are wrapped up in some natural and instinctive purpose. Look at a dog chasing his prey, a lover pursuing his beloved, a band of vigorous men advancing to battle, a crowd of friends drinking and laughing. That shows us, say the writers aforesaid, what life can be and what it ought to be. "Let us not think and question," they say. "Let us be healthy and direct, and not fret against the main current of instinctive feeling and tradition."

In matters of art such a habit of mind may be valuable; in matters of truth or of conduct, it is, I believe, as disastrous as it is alluring. True, the way of instinct is pleasant. I happened once to be waiting at a railway

station on a summer afternoon. There were several railway men about, rather wearily engaged on work of one sort or another, when suddenly something happened which made them look alert and cheerful and put a kindly smile on their faces. One of them had seen some small animal — I think a rat — and a little crowd of them ran blithely and pelted it to death. One would have seen the same kindly and happy smile, the same healthy vigour, in the people who amid other circumstances let loose their hunting instincts on runaway slaves or heretics or Jews. And the man among them who should feel a qualm, who should check himself and try to think whether such hunting was really a pleasant and praiseworthy action, would, I have little doubt, have looked guilty and uneasy and tongue-tied. His face would have condemned him. "Why should he trouble himself with thinking and criticizing?" people may say. "Why not enjoy himself with his mates? Thought is just as likely to lead you wrong as feeling is."

The answer of mankind to such pleadings should be firm and clear. Human reason is very far from infallible, but the only remedy for bad thinking is to think better. The question was really settled for us thousands and thousands of years ago, by those little lemurs in the marshy forests. They took not the path of ease, but the path of hard brain-work, and we their children must go on with it. That is the way of life and the bettering of life, to think and labour and build up; not to glide with the current. We of the human race have our work in the scheme of things; and to do our work we must use all our powers, especially our greatest powers, those of thinking and judging. And even if we deliberately set our faces in the other direction, if we yield to the stream of instinct

and let scruples and doubts and inhibitions be swept away, we shall not really find life easier. At least not for long. For the powers to which we yield will only demand more and more.

There is one character in Shakespeare, who is often taken as a type — a very unflattering type, I admit — of the follower of the mere instincts; who feels the release, the joy, the sense of revelation which they bring, and thinks that they will lead him to glory. And I suspect that some modern adorers of instinct as against reason will in the end awake to disillusion like that of Caliban: —

> What a thrice-double ass
> Was I, to take this drunkard for a God,
> And worship this dull fool!

IV

INDIA AND THE WAR[1]

(March, 1915)

LORD HALDANE, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: —

My task to-night is anything but an easy one. I wish to speak to one half of my audience only, though I am more than pleased that the other half should overhear all I say. I want to speak to the Indian students, and to speak to them as frankly as possible. It would be easy and very pleasant to expatiate on the achievements of the Indian troops in the war and the loyalty shown by the Indian people to the Empire. But I know that, if I did so, some Indians would be tempted to smile sardonically, and suspect that we have taken this loyalty too much as our due, as a mere testimonial to our good government. "We are loyal," an Indian friend of mine once said to me; "but our loyalty is to India, not England." He spoke only for himself, and I do not feel sure he was right, even for himself. Loyalty is not a thing that is owed. It is a thing that grows, or does not grow. When people have been comrades and worked together for a long time, — even with occasional quarrels, — there rises normally among decent human beings a bond of trust and a mutual expectation. Now, I believe that between India and England that bond exists. We have had a long experience together and mostly — mostly — we have not failed one another. In your times of need, in

[1] Address to Indian students.

plague or famine, you confidently expect us to help, and you find even our roughest subalterns and haughtiest officials working their fingers to the bone to help your people. In our times of need — well, you have not often had the full chance of showing what you could do. It is one of your grievances, and one with which I warmly sympathize. But now, when we are threatened to our very life, you have helped. You have given us more than we ever dared expect. That message of the Indian kings and princes which Mr. Roberts read out in the House of Commons will not easily be forgotten.

We shall, I believe, win this war. India will share our glory. The same battles will be emblazoned on the banners of Indian and British regiments. But as you share our glory you will share our dangers; and it is a time of extreme gravity that fronts us when we look into the future. Before the war we were disturbed by an uncertain and treacherous neighbour. After the war we shall have a deadly enemy. It seems to me that the irony of history has been at work with Great Britain. As a nation we emphatically believe in peace. We are a people of traders and manufacturers who live by peace. Our ideals and philosophies are all peaceful. Yet here we stand, in the centre of an enormous war. Again, we believe in freedom, democracy, government by consent. We have largely been the teachers of those ideals to the world. And here we have climbed or slipped, steered or drifted, into the administration of a vast empire where we are governing dozens of other races by a system imposed from without and not dependent on the consent of the governed. No doubt we govern well. Some of you will have criticisms to make, but on the whole most people admit that we bring to the

art of government unrivalled experience and a great tradition of public spirit. But, granted that we govern well, we are still governing from outside, not by means of free institutions, and not in the spirit that we normally consider British. And more, we do not see — I believe no one in the world sees — how any other method of government is possible, except, indeed, as a goal to work towards by progressive and careful change. That was the policy laid down by the Liberal statesmen of the nineteenth century, and to that I hope we shall always hold.

What is the end to be? — not now, but hereafter, when you and I are in our graves to east or west of the great ocean, and the disputes, and grievances, and schemes of policy that divided us are forgotten or only remembered as curious puzzles for future historians to make sense of. Is the great Empire — I wish there was another word for it — of which you and I are part, for which your brothers and mine are shedding their blood together in Flanders, in Egypt, on the shores of the Persian Gulf, to grow to be indeed a Commonwealth, the greatest community of free men and women that the world has seen? Or is it to fail, to end in bloodshed and ruin? Or again to establish and stereotype itself as one more in the great world-list of despotic empires, Babylon, Egypt, Rome, Byzantium, which have sometimes lasted so long and passed away so unregretted?

That is the problem on which you and we are set. Neither of us can reject it. From the ends of the earth two utterly different civilizations, which yet were closely akin in their remote origins, have been caught again by the process of world-history and set together to this enormous task. Of course we may cut the problem: we

may rush upon failure by mere fratricide. We may shirk it by abandoning our deepest ideals. We may, by great labour and heroic patience, by constant hard thinking and facing of facts, solve it successfully by building up the great Commonwealth of which I spoke.

I do not underrate the difficulties that lie before us or the differences that separate us. One of them was brought home to me suddenly and vividly some time ago. There was a meeting to discuss our Government's policy in Persia; one speaker defending the Government suggested that our Ministers, knowing that Germany was ready to spring at the throat of her rivals at the first sign of difference between them, thought the danger of disintegration to Persia not too high a price to pay for European peace. The plea was I will not say accepted, but considered reasonable by the meeting. Then there rose an Indian — not a Parsee. He spoke quietly, not like a foreigner or one speaking a language strange to him. He seemed essentially one of us. And with an emotion that vibrated through the room he said that to him and his, European peace was as dust in the balance compared with the disintegration of Persia. Many of those who applauded him must have done so with a certain sense of guilt, a feeling that Persia had been to them a remote, unknown, half-civilized place which might, in a great crisis, be legitimately sacrificed to the peace of Europe. We must try to feel as an Indian would about such things as this; or at least to understand how he would feel.

We shall have clashes of that sort, clashes arising chiefly from facts of geography. We shall have interminable clashes of habit and national character; clashes of sentiment. An instance is our present war with

Turkey. There has been a strain there, and both sides have met it with great forbearance. Indian Moslems have to look on while we batter down the door of a great Moslem empire. We, because of our relations to you, have stood a great deal more from Turkey than we should naturally be inclined to stand. Yes: as the Germans have pointed out, there are between you and us the seeds of disunion. Of course there are, any one can see them. But there are seeds of brotherhood as well. And it does not follow that seeds of evil need grow more than other seeds. There is no nation so uniform, no small society, no band of friends, which has not seeds of disunion in it. It rests with men themselves, with their good-will and strength of character, whether amid the million seeds which life scatters, one kind or another comes to maturity. We must see to it that the seeds of disunion die while the others ripen.

Again, we shall have clashes arising out of our differences of religion. The situation needs toleration, forbearance: yes, but it needs more than that. It needs active mutual appreciation. If Christian and Moslem, Christian and Hindu, are to form a real Commonwealth, it is not enough for one of them to say of the others, "Such-and-such is a good fellow in spite of his religion." You must see that he is good because of his religion. There is some inherent religious quality, some piety, or devotion, which comes out in one religion as in another, and deserves respect. There are doubtless also some special qualities which are fostered specially by each separate religion. I speak from a point of view which some of you will share, some not; though I have heard a missionary say nearly as much. To me it seems to the last degree improbable that any one religion, or

any one form of culture, has the monopoly of truth, and I expect Christianity to be improved by contact and comparison of thought with other great religions.

And further: if this is true in religion, it must be true also in civilization. Look at any single civilization as it now exists. Look at it with plenty of common sense, but also a little imagination. England's is a fine civilization; it is both stable and progressive. Almost every department of it, if you ask the experts, is demonstrably improving.

Yet look through England. Go to the hotels and boarding-houses and notice the people you see; walk the streets of the great manufacturing towns; go to the places of amusement, the theatres and music-halls, and observe the audiences. Is it a civilization with which one can feel content? Is it a civilization to impose, untempered, upon the world? Clearly not. And your own civilization — I will not be impolite to it. I will leave you yourselves to think it over; to ask if it is satisfactory, if it is free from characteristics that fill you with discouragement and even some sense of shame, if it can possibly hold up its head as an equal among the great moving forces of the modern world except by drawing abundantly on the enlightenment of the West? I do not know what your various answers will be. But for my own part I believe that the true development of this vast heterogeneous mass of strong life which we call the British Empire will involve utilizing all the different elements and contributions which our various races and societies can bring to the common stock. The process is already going on. It lies with us to make it into a good process or a bad. It is very easy to choose the bad and cheap and vulgar things in one another's habits. The way to do that is to

begin by despising one another and looking out for the contemptible things. If we respect one another, we shall tend more to notice and cultivate what is good.

One great permanent difficulty — you see all my speech is made up of difficulties — is the vastness and variety of our respective nations. Many a time it must happen that an Englishman and an Indian, talking as friends over their national differences, feel that if the matter lay with them, if they too were their respective nations, it would not be hard to come to an understanding. But behind each is a trail of innumerable human beings, utterly unlike the two supposed principals. I can think of many pairs of sensible people who would do for my purpose; several statesmen, a great many writers and historians. But imagine, for example, Lord Haldane and the late Mr. Gokhale. Clearly they would understand each other: they might or might not agree on some special point, but the basis of common action and agreement and mutual respect would be there. But as you look at England, doubtless you see behind Lord Haldane masses of people less understanding and less sympathetic, cheerful, ignorant subalterns, common soldiers who talk contemptuously about "black men"; determined old gentlemen, most falsely called "imperialists," who cry out that India was taken by the sword and must be held by the sword. You see in your indignant imagination the squalid crowds that reel out of our public houses and music-halls and race-courses, and ask with secret rage if these are your born masters; if these are the people who claim by blood and birth and colour to be your inherent superiors! Is that overstated? No; I think not; though we must always remember in a well-ordered modern State how little the baser elements of a

population direct its policy. But there they are. And on the other side, behind Mr. Gokhale — you can imagine better than I can describe the extraordinary combination of peoples, of different habits and ethics, different religions and superstitions, different levels of culture from almost the highest to the lowest. "One nation governing another": put at its crudest, such a principle implies putting the whole of one of these vast, incoherent, heterogeneous masses on top of the other to govern it. Any such process would be clearly wrong. It is a principle which even the stoutest, old-fashioned imperialist has abandoned. The only possible plan is, by one method or another, to select out of both masses those capable of governing best, and of best understanding and learning from one another.

For the rest, we in our home politics have a large task before us in levelling up the conditions of our poorer classes to something worthier of our place in the world, in material conditions, in education, in outlook on the whole of life. Our task will be heavy; but a task of the same character lies before you, and yours will be colossal. You have a far larger field to plough; you have to cut your way through a far deeper and wilder jungle. To raise the level of life in Great Britain — in India: the more they are both raised to the level of their best people, the more they will be ready to understand and help one another, the more all the unnecessary difficulties between the two parties will tend to disappear.

"Bande Mataram": "Hail, Mother!" I attended lately an Indian dinner where that Nationalist motto met one's eye at every turn. You will work in devotion to your Mother. It is well that you should. And no one who knows you can doubt that you have among you the

spirit of martyrs. That is a fine thing; in some emergencies of life an indispensable thing. But there is something far finer, and that is the spirit of a statesman. A martyr sacrifices himself rather than be false to some principle. A statesman, without thinking of himself one way or another, when he finds some evil or dangerous state of affairs sees how to make it safe or good. Let us serve our Mothers, you yours and we ours, so far as we can in the spirit of statesmen.

But is there not — I put this question quite practically — a Greater Mother whose children we all are, whose day is coming, but not yet come? Cannot you and we work together in the service of this Greater Commonwealth, which is also the service of humanity? We *must* be together. I can see no future for an isolated India; no happy future for a Great Britain which is content to boast that she holds India merely by the sword. Working together, we have formidable obstacles to face, but we have wonderful and unique gifts to contribute. Nations are apt to see vividly enough one another's faults, but they would do better to remember, as J. S. Mill puts it, their "reciprocal superiorities." I will not try now to define them. My own respect for England — if for the moment I may speak as one who has but little pure English blood in his veins, being an Australian Irishman of Scotch descent — has grown steadily with experience. But I will not dwell on special virtues of England, nor yet on those of India; on your wonderful intellectual aptitude and readiness for fine thought; on your great past which is still living; on your people's characteristic aloofness from the vulgarity of modern Western life; on the qualities shown in your Moslem architecture, your Hindu religious thought. But here

I would venture, if I may, to suggest a caution. Some writers, I know, hold up for your admiration and example that famous episode in the Bhagavad Gita in which even the noise of battle has to wait unregarded while the stream of philosophic thinking runs its course. That spirit is a fine element in life; but, if I may for once give advice, I will say: Beware of letting it be more than an element. To an Indian who wishes to make India great I would say, Beware of losing yourself in reverie while others are fighting the battles of life. Beware altogether of dreams and dreamlike passions. Face facts; get knowledge; cultivate common sense; learn to trust and be trusted; serve your community. Do not lose yourselves in admiration of your own past or your own racial peculiarities; think of your future, and be not afraid to uproot from your culture every element which prevents India taking her place among free and progressive nations.

You need never be afraid that your own special qualities will not remain and exercise their valuable influence on the world. You will teach us and we you. And other nations will be near, bringing their help and their lessons: America not far off with her generous swiftness of movement and her loving-kindness towards all in suffering; not very far, perhaps, even our present enemies with their great powers of discipline, of self-devotion, and of remorseless effectiveness. Let us preserve our national characters. Let us use our feelings of patriotism and nationalism to inspire us and to give strength to our hands; but at the back of our minds let us always remember our wider Commonwealth, our Greater Mother, and think of the time when we brother nations may bring our various gifts to her feet and say together our "Bande Mataram."

V

THE EVIL AND THE GOOD OF THE WAR [1]

(October, 1915)

I SHOULD like before I begin to express to you the very real gratitude I feel to a body like this in asking me to give this address, and in treating one whose religious views, freely expressed in books and lectures, are probably to the left of almost all those here present, not as an outsider, but recognizing that people in my position are also capable of a religious spirit, and of seeking after truth in the same way as yourselves. I believe that you and I are in real and fundamental sympathy both over religious questions proper, and over a question like this of the war, which tests one's ultimate beliefs and the real working religion by which one lives. I think that we may say that probably all here do begin, in their own minds, by feeling the war as an ethical problem. Certainly that is the way it appealed to me, and it is from that point of view that I wish to speak to-night.

Curiously enough, I remember speaking in this hall, I suppose about fifteen years ago, against the policy of the war in South Africa. I little imagined then that I should live to speak in favour of the policy of a much greater and more disastrous war, but that is what, on the whole, I shall do. But I want to begin by facing certain facts. Do not let us attempt to blind ourselves or be blinded by phrases into thinking that the war is

[1] Address to the Congress of Free Churches, October 27, 1915.

anything but a disaster, and an appalling disaster. Do not let us be led away by views which have some gleam of truth in them into believing that this war will put an end to war—that it will convert Germany, and certainly convert Russia to liberal opinions, that it will establish natural frontiers throughout Europe or that it will work a moral regeneration in nations which were somehow sapped by too many years of easy living in peace. There is some truth, and very valuable truth, in all those considerations, but they do not alter the fact that the war is, as I said, an appalling disaster. We knew when we entered upon it that it was a disaster — we knew that we should suffer, and that all Europe would suffer.

Now, let us run over very briefly the ways in which it is doing evil. Let us face the evil first. There is, first, the mere suffering, the leagues and leagues of human suffering that is now spreading across Europe, the suffering of the soldiers, the actual wounded combatants, and behind them the suffering of non-combatants, the suffering of people dispossessed, of refugees, of people turned suddenly homeless into a world without pity. Behind that you have the sufferings of dumb animals. We are not likely to forget them. There is another side which we are even less likely to forget, and that is our own personal losses. There are very few people in this room who have not suffered in that direct, personal way; there will be still fewer by the end of the war. I do not want to dwell upon that question; the tears are very close behind our eyes when we begin to think of that aspect of things, and it is not for me to bring them forward. Think, again, of the State's loss, the loss of all those chosen men; not mere men taken haphazard, but young, strong men,

largely men of the most generous and self-sacrificing impulses, who responded most swiftly to the call for their loyalty and their lives. Some of them are dead, some will come back injured, maimed, invalided, in various ways broken. There is an old Greek proverb which exactly expresses the experience that we shall be forced to go through, "The spring is taken out of your year." For a good time ahead the years of England and of most of Europe will be without a spring. In that consideration I think it is only fair, and I am certain that an audience like this will agree with me, to add all the nations together. It is not only we and our allies who are suffering the loss there; it is a loss to humanity. According to the Russian proverb, "They are all sons of mothers" — the wildest Senegalese, the most angry Prussian. And that is the state that we are in. We rejoice — of course we rejoice — to hear of great German losses. We face the fact: we do rejoice; yet it is terrible that we should have to; for the loss of these young Germans is also a great and a terrible loss to humanity. It seems almost trivial after these considerations of life and death, to think too much of our monetary losses; of the fact that we have spent 1595 millions and that we are throwing away money at the rate of nearly five millions a day. Yet just think what it means; that precious surplus with which we meant to make England finer in every way — that surplus is gone.

From a rich, generous, sanguine nation putting her hopes in the future, we shall emerge a rather poverty-stricken nation, bound to consider every penny of increased expenditure; a harassed nation, only fortunate if we are still free. Just think of all our schemes of reform and how they are blown to the four winds —

schemes of social improvement, of industrial improvement; a scheme like Lord Haldane's great education scheme which was to begin by caring for the health of the small child, and then lead him up by a great highway from the primary school to the university! How some of us who were specially interested in education revelled in the thought of that great idea; but it was going to cost such a lot of money. It would cost nearly as much as half a week of the war! Think what riches we had then, and on the whole, although we are perhaps the most generous nation in Europe, what little use we made of them.

We speak of spiritual regeneration as one of the results of war, but here too there is the spiritual evil to be faced. I do not speak merely of the danger of reaction. There will be a grave danger of political reaction and of religious reaction, and you will all have your work cut out for you in that matter. The political reaction, I believe, will not take the form of a mere wave of extreme conservatism; the real danger will be a reaction against anything that can be called mellow and wise in politics; the real danger will be a struggle between crude, militarist reaction and violent, unthinking democracy. As for religion, you are probably all anxious as to what is going to happen there. Every narrow form of religion is lifting up its horns again; rank superstition is beginning to flourish. I am told that fortune-tellers and crystal-gazers are really having now the time of their lives. It will be for bodies like yourselves to be careful about all that. But besides that there is another more direct spiritual danger. We cannot go on living an abnormal life without becoming fundamentally disorganized. We have seen that, especially in Germany; with them it seems to be a tend-

ency much stronger and much worse than it is with us; but clearly you cannot permanently concentrate your mind on injuring your fellow creatures without habituating yourself to evil thoughts. In Germany, of course, there is a deliberate cult of hatred. There is a process, which I will not stop to analyze, a process utterly amazing, by which a highly civilized and ordinarily humane nation has gone on from what I can only call atrocity to atrocity. How these people have ever induced themselves to commit the crimes in Belgium which are attested by Lord Bryce's Commission, or even to organize the flood of calculated mendacity that they pour out day by day, and last of all to stand by passive and apparently approving, while deeds like the new Armenian massacres are going on under their ægis and in the very presence of their consuls, — all this passes one's imagination. Now, we do not act like that; there is something or other in the English nature which will not allow it. We shall show anger and passion, but we are probably not capable of that kind of organized cruelty, and I hope we never shall be. Yet the same forces are at work.

I do not want to dwell upon this subject too long, but when people talk of national regeneration or the reverse, there is one very obvious and plain test which one looks at first, and that is the drink bill. We have made a great effort to restrain our drinking; large numbers of people have given up consuming wine and spirits altogether, following the King's example. We have made a great effort and what is the result? The drink bill is up seven millions as compared with the last year of peace! That seven millions is partly due to the increased price; but at the old prices it would still be up rather over two

millions. And ahead, at the end of all this, what prospect is there? There is sure to be poverty and unemployment, great and long continued, just as there was after 1815. I trust we shall be better able to face it; we shall have thought out the difficulties more; we who are left with any reasonable margin of subsistence will, I hope, be more generous and more clear-sighted than our ancestors a century earlier. But in any case there is coming a time of great social distress and very little money indeed to meet it with. We shall achieve, no doubt, peace in Europe, we shall have probably some better arrangement of frontiers, but underneath the peace there will be terrific hatred. And in the heart of Europe, instead of a treacherous and grasping neighbour, we shall be left with a deadly enemy, living for revenge.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I do not think that I have shirked the indictment of this war. It is a terrible indictment; and you will ask me, perhaps, after that description, if I still believe that our policy in declaring war was right. Yes, I do. Have I any doubt in any corner of my mind that the war was right? I have none. We took the path of duty and the only path we could take. Some people speak now as if going on with the war was a kind of indulgence of our evil passions. The war is not an indulgence of our evil passions; the war is a martyrdom.

Now, let us not exaggerate here. It is not a martyrdom for Christianity. I saw a phrase the other day that we were fighting for the nailed hand of One Crucified against the "mailed fist." That description is an ideal a man may carry in his own heart, but, of course, it is an exaggeration to apply to our national position, to the position of any nation in international politics. We are not

saints, we are not a nation of early Christians. Yet we are fighting for a great cause. . . . How shall I express it? We are a country of ripe political experience, of ancient freedom; we are, with all our faults, I think, a country of kindly record and generous ideals, and we stand for the established tradition of good behaviour between nations. We stand for the observance of treaties and the recognition of mutual rights, for the tradition of common honesty and common kindliness between nation and nation; we stand for the old decencies, the old humanities, "the old ordinance," as the King's letter put it, "the old ordinance that has bound civilized Europe together." And against us there is a power which, as the King says, has changed that ordinance. Europe is no longer held together by the old decencies as it was. The enemy has substituted for it some rule which we cannot yet fathom to its full depth. You can call it militarism or *Realpolitik* if you like; it seems to involve the domination of force and fraud, it seems to involve organized ruthlessness, organized terrorism, organized mendacity. The phrase that comes back to my mind when I think of it is Mr. Gladstone's description of another evil rule — it is the negation of God erected into a system of government. The sort of thing for which we are fighting, the old ordinance, the old kindliness, and the old humanities — is it too much to say that, if there is God in man, it is in these things, after all, that God in man speaks?

The old ordinance is illogical. Of course it is illogical. It means that civilized human beings in the midst of their greatest passions, in the midst of their angers and rages, feel that there is something deeper, something more important than war or victory — that at the bottom of all strife there are some remnants of human

brotherhood. Now, I do not want to go into a long list of German atrocities; much less do I want to denounce the enemy. As Mr. Balfour put it in his whimsical way, "We take our enemy as we find him." But there has been a special method throughout this war — the method the enemy has followed, to go at each step outside the old conventions. We have sometimes followed. Sometimes we have had to follow. But the whole history of the war is a history of that process. The peoples fought according to certain rules, but one people got outside the rules right from the beginning. The broken treaty, the calculated ferocity in Belgium and northern France, the killing of women and non-combatants by sea and land and air, the shelling of hospitals, the ill-treatment of wounded prisoners; all the doctoring of weapons with a view to cruelty; the explosive bullets; the projectiles tinctured with substances which would produce a gangrenous wound; the poisoned gases; the infected wells. It is the same method throughout. The old conventions of humanity, the old arrangements which admitted that, beneath our cruelties, beneath our hatreds, there was some common humanity and friendliness between all nations, these have been systematically broken one after another. Now, observe; these things were done not recklessly but to gain a specific advantage; they were done, as Mr. Secretary Zimmermann put it in the case of Miss Cavell, "to inspire fear." And observe that in many places they have been successful. They have inspired fear. Only look at what has recently happened and what is happening now in the Balkans. Every one of these Balkan States has looked at Belgium. The German agents have told them to look at Belgium. They have looked at Belgium and their courage has failed. Is that

the way in which we wish the government of the world to be conducted in future? It is the way it will be conducted unless we and our allies stand firm to the end.

All these points, terrible as they are, seem to me to be merely consequences from what happened at the very beginning of the war. There are probably some people here who differ from what I am saying and I am grateful to them for the patient way in which they are listening to me. To all these I would earnestly say, "Do not despise the diplomatic documents." Remember carefully that the diplomacy of July and August, 1914, is a central fact. Remember that it is the one part of the history antecedent to this war which is absolutely clear as daylight. Read the documents and read the serious studies of them. I would recommend specially the book by Mr. William Archer, called "Thirteen Days." There is also Mr. Headlam's admirable book, "The History of Twelve Days," and the equally admirable book by the American jurist, Mr. Stowell.[1] There the issue is clear and the question is settled. The verdict of history is already given in these negotiations. There was a dispute, a somewhat artificial dispute which could easily have been settled by a little reasonableness on the part of the two principals. If that failed, there was the mediation of friends, there was a conference of the disinterested nations — there was appeal to the Concert of Europe. There was the arbitration of The Hague — an arbitration to which Serbia appealed on the very first day and to which the Czar appealed again on the very last. All Europe wanted peace and fair settlement. The Governments of the two Central Powers refused it. Every sort

[1] [Ellery C. Stowell, *The Diplomacy of the War of 1914: The Beginnings of the War* (Boston, 1915).]

of settlement was overridden. You will all remember that when every settlement that we could propose had been shoved aside one after another, Sir Edward Grey made an appeal to Germany to make any proposal herself — any reasonable proposal — and we bound ourselves to accept it, to accept it even at the cost of deserting our associates. No such proposal was made. All Europe wanted peace and fair dealing except one Power, or one pair of Powers if you so call it, who were confident, not in the justice of their cause, but in the overpowering strength of their war machine. As the semi-official newspapers said, "Germany does not enter conferences in which she is likely to be in a minority." By fair dealing they might have got their rights or a little more than their rights. By war they expected to get something like the supremacy of Europe. In peace, with their neighbours reasonable, in no pressing danger, Germany deliberately preferred war to fair settlement; and thereby in my judgement Germany committed the primal and fundamental sin against the brotherhood of mankind.

Of course all great historical events have complicated causes, but on that fact almost alone I should base the justice and the necessity of our cause in this war. Other objects have been suggested: that we are fighting lest Europe should be subject to the hegemony of Germany. If Germany naturally by legitimate means grows to be the most influential Power there is no reason for any one to fight her. It is said we are fighting for democracy against autocratic government. I prefer democracy myself, but one form of government has no right to declare war because it dislikes another form. It is suggested that we are fighting to prevent the break-up of the Empire. In that case, from motives of loyalty, of course we should

have to fight, and I think the break-up of the Empire would be a great disaster to the world. But not for any causes of that description would I use the phrase I have used, or say that in this war we were undergoing a martyrdom. I do use it deliberately now: for I believe no greater evil could occur than that mankind should submit, or should agree to submit, to the rule of naked force.

Now, I would ask again those who are following me, as I say, with patience, but I have no doubt with difficulty, to remember that this situation — in spite of particular details — is on the whole an old story. The Greeks knew all about it when they used the word "Hubris" — that pride engendered by too much success which leads to every crime. Many nations after a career of extraordinary success have become mad or drunk with ambition. "By that sin fell the angels." They were not wicked to start with, but afterwards they became devils. We should never have said a word against the Germans before this madness entered into them. We liked them. Most of Europe rather liked and admired them. But, as I said, it is an old story. There have been tyrants. Tyrants are common things in history. Bloody aggression is a common thing in history in its darker periods. But nearly always, where there have been tyrants and aggressors, there have been men and peoples ready to stand up and suffer and to die rather than submit to the tyrant, and the voice of history speaks pretty clearly about these issues and it says that the men who resisted were right. So that, ladies and gentlemen, as with our eyes open we entered into this struggle, I say with our eyes open we must go on with it. We must go on with it a united nation, trusting our

leaders, obeying our rulers, minding each man his own business, refusing for an instant to lend an ear to the agitated whispers of faction or of hysteria. It may be that we shall have to traverse the valley of death, but we shall traverse it until the cause of humanity is won.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, that being the cause, we are girt up in this war to the performance of a great duty; and there are many things in it which, evil as they are, can in some way be turned to good. It lies with us to do our best so to turn them.

If we take the old analogy from biology, we are a community, a pack, a herd, a flock. We have realized our unity. We are one. I think most of us feel that our lives are not our own; they belong to England. France has gone through the same process to an even greater degree. Mr. Kipling, who used certainly to be no special lover of France, has told us that there "the men are wrought to an edge of steel, and the women are a line of fire behind them." Our divisions before the war it is a disgrace to think of. They were so great that the enemy calculated upon them, and judged that we should not be able to fight. These divisions have not been killed as we hoped; the remnants of them are still living. I cannot bear to speak of them. Let us think as little as possible about them, and lend no ear, no patience to the people who try to make them persist. As for the division of class and class, I think there, at least, we have made a great gain. I would ask you to put to yourselves this test. Remember how before the war the ordinary workman spoke of his employer and the employer of his workmen, and think now how the average soldier speaks of his officer and how the officer speaks of his men. The

change is almost immeasurable. Inside the country we have gained that unity; outside in our relations with foreign countries we have also made a great gain. Remember we have allies now, more allies and far closer allies than we have ever had. We have learned to respect and to understand other nations. You cannot read those diplomatic documents of which I spoke without feeling respect for both the French and Russian diplomatists for their steadiness, their extreme reasonableness, their entire loyalty, and as you study them you are amused to see the little differences of national character all working to one end. Since the war has come on we have learned to admire other nations. There is no man in England who will ever again in his heart dare to speak slightingly or with contempt of Belgium or Serbia. It is something that we have had our hearts opened, that we, who were rather an insular people, have learned to welcome other nations as friends and comrades.

Nay, more, we made these alliances originally on a special principle about which I would like to say a sentence or two. That is the principle of the *Entente*, or Cordial Understanding, which is specially connected with the name of our present Foreign Secretary, and, to a slighter extent, with that of his predecessor. The principle of the *Entente* has been explained by Sir Edward Grey several times, but I take two phrases of his own particularly. It began because he found that "all experience had shown that any two great empires who were touching each other, whose interests rubbed one against another frequently in different parts of the world, had no middle course open to them between continual liability to friction and cordial friendship." He succeeded in establishing that relation of perfect frank-

ness and mutual friendship with the two great empires with whom our interests were always rubbing. Instead of friction, instead of suspicion and intrigue, we established with our two old rivals a permanent habit of fair dealing, frankness, and good-will. The second great principle of the *Entente* was this, that there is nothing exclusive in these friendships. We began it with France, we continued it with Russia, we achieved it in reality, although not in actual diplomatic name, with the United States, and practically also with Italy, and any one who has read the diplomatic history will see the effort upon effort we made to establish it with our present enemies. I think we have here some real basis for a sort of alliance of Europe — that sort of better concert for which we all hope. One cannot guess details. It is very likely, indeed, that at the beginning Germany will stay outside and will refuse to come into our kind of concert. If so we must "take our enemies as we find them." The fact of there being an enemy outside will very likely make us inside hold together all the better for the first few years. When we are once thoroughly in harness, and most nations have the practice of habitually trusting one another and never intriguing against one another, then, no doubt, the others will come in.

Now, I spoke at the beginning about the possible dangers of reaction, but there is a very good side also in the reaction. Part of it is right. It is in part a reaction against superficial things, superficial ways of feeling, and perhaps also superficial ways of thought. We have gone back in our daily experience to deeper and more primitive things. There has been a deepening of the quality of our ordinary life. We are called upon to take up a

greater duty than ever before. We have to face more peril, we have to endure greater suffering; death itself has come close to us. It is intimate in the thoughts of every one of us, and it has taught us in some way to love one another. For the first time for many centuries this "unhappy but not inglorious generation," as it has been called, is living and moving daily, waking and sleeping, in the habitual presence of ultimate and tremendous things. We are living now in a great age.

A thing which has struck me, and I have spoken of it elsewhere, is the way in which the language of romance and melodrama has now become true. It is becoming the language of our normal life. The old phrase about "dying for freedom," about "Death being better than dishonour," — phrases that we thought were fitted for the stage or for children's stories, — are now the ordinary truths on which we live. A phrase which happened to strike me was recorded of a Canadian soldier who went down, I think, in the Arabic after saving several people; before he sank he turned and said, "I have served my King and country and this is my end." It was the natural way of expressing the plain fact. I read yesterday a letter from a soldier at the front about the death of one of his fellow soldiers, and the letter ended quite simply: "After all he has done what we all want to do — die for England." The man who wrote it has since then had his wish. Or, again, if one wants a phrase to live by which would a few years ago have seemed somewhat unreal, or high-falutin, he can take those words of Miss Cavell that are now in everybody's mind, "I see now that patriotism is not enough; I must die without hatred or bitterness towards any one."

Romance and melodrama were a memory, broken

fragments living on, of heroic ages in the past. We live no longer upon fragments and memories; we have entered ourselves upon a heroic age. As for me personally, there is one thought that is always with me as, no doubt, it is with us all — the thought that other men are dying for me, better men, younger, with more hope in their lives, many of them men whom I have taught and loved. I hope you will allow me to say something here, and will not be in any way offended by the thought I want to express. Some of you will be orthodox Christians, and will be familiar with the thought of One who loved you dying for you. I would like to say that now I seem to be familiar with the feeling that something innocent, something great, something that loves me, has died, and is dying for me daily.

That is the sort of community that we now are — a community in which one man dies for his brother; and underneath all our hatreds, all our little angers and quarrels, we are brothers who are ready to seal our brotherhood with blood. It is for us that these men are dying, for us the women, the old men, and the rejected men, and to preserve the civilization and the common life which we are keeping alive and reshaping, towards wisdom or unwisdom, towards unity or discord. Ladies and gentlemen, let us be worthy of these men; let us be ready each one with our sacrifice when it is asked. Let us try as citizens to live a life which shall not be a mockery to the faith these men have placed in us. Let us build up an England for which these men, lying in their scattered graves over the face of the green world, would have been proud to die.

VI

DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF FOREIGN POLICY[1]

EVEN if this book were less good than it is, it would deserve reading for its admirable manners. It does not, indeed, convince my reason, but it leaves me with a profound respect for the tone and method of English politics at their best. No one would ever suspect from these pages of temperate and courteous argument that the author was a man who had just sacrificed his Parliamentary career to his principles, whose meetings were broken up by roughs, his person attacked, and his reputation assailed by gross calumny. This temper of mind is not only fine in itself, but particularly valuable in the present instance, inasmuch as it enables Mr. Ponsonby to clarify and to reduce to its true proportions a question on which political opinion has tended to run wild. Democratic Control has become a flag of battle. A bugbear to most orthodox supporters of the Government, it is a saving ideal to many sensitive and high-minded people who are half-maddened by the horrors that have descended upon us, and wish instinctively to explain them as the chastisement of some obvious sin.

Now, Mr. Ponsonby has really thought out the details of a scheme for securing greater Parliamentary and democratic control over foreign politics. It is not likely that his whole scheme will ever be adopted as it stands;

[1] Review of *Democracy and Diplomacy: A Plea for Popular Control of Foreign Policy*, by Arthur Ponsonby, M.P. (Methuen. 1915.)

but I think it will perform two public services. In the first place, if the Union of Democratic Control, to whom the book is dedicated, adopts it, it will substitute a definite programme for a vague cry; and, in the second place, I think it will make clear to most reasonable people that a reform which consists in certain far from startling changes in Parliamentary custom cannot possibly produce that transfiguration of international politics for which so many hearts are athirst.

Of course, Mr. Ponsonby's proposals for the future are based on a reading of the past, and, in my judgement, on a very serious misreading. "Diplomacy has failed." This is an outstanding "fact about which there can be no manner of dispute." I fear there can and must be. In a sense, of course, diplomacy has failed; just as one might say that law had failed whenever a burglar knocked down a policeman. But to most of us it seems a strangely shallow reading of events which finds the causes of the war in any mere perversity of Foreign Offices or any awkwardness in diplomatic machinery. It was not any bungling of diplomats that united the Powers of Europe against Napoleon.

Neither can I for a moment accept the statement that, in Great Britain, between 1906 and 1914, "the people's view of international relations was fundamentally different from the traditional view of Governments" (p. 39), or that the House of Commons did not know — and approve — the general line of policy followed by the Foreign Office (p. 58). Mr. Ponsonby himself complains elsewhere that it was impossible to stir up in the House of Commons enough opposition, or even curiosity, in the region of foreign policy to bring about a debate (pp. 48, 90, 99). This shows that there was at least no conscious-

ness of a "fundamental difference." And no one will pretend that the secrecy practised by the Foreign Office was so complete and successful, that the "fundamental difference" was there without any one ever suspecting it. Further, it seems to me quite untrue, indeed peculiarly untrue, to say that, while Ministers are ready enough to make war speeches when occasion demands, no one "ever heard of a Minister going round and making peace speeches" in peace time (p. 29). I can remember not only "peace speeches" by various members of the Government, but, what is far more useful, a great many semi-official societies and enterprises devoted to encouraging good relations with foreign nations, especially with Germany. Such movements could always calculate on influential support. Indeed, if Mr. Ponsonby can bring himself to read a book of Mr. Maxse's, entitled — very suitably —"Germany on the Brain," he will see that many persons lived for years in a state of habitual hysterics at the overfriendly tone towards Germany exhibited by all the members of the late Government.

Mr. Ponsonby is on firmer ground when he dwells upon the great power held in foreign affairs by the Executive, whether you regard that Executive as vested in the Cabinet or in the Foreign Secretary. (I think, by the way, that he considerably underestimates the element of Cabinet control. Does he really, for instance, imagine that Sir Edward Grey could have acted without the support of the Prime Minister?) He quotes in his second chapter some weighty opinions on this subject, especially from Lord Bryce and Mr. Austen Chamberlain. The Foreign Secretary has, without doubt, of late years ruled almost like a monarch over his vast domain; that is true,

but what is the reason of it? The reason of it is that both Parliament and the country supported and trusted him. Suppose Mr. Ponsonby had been Foreign Secretary instead of Sir Edward Grey: would he, too, have had that undisputed authority? Or would he have found the press and the House of Commons so apathetic and complaisant? Clearly not. The House of Commons would have bristled with threatening questions and motions of adjournment and full-dress party debates on foreign policy. And, as a necessary result, the Liberal and Conservative associations throughout the country would have been stirred, and the average voter would have formed vehement opinions about Mohammerah or Bunder Abbas or Fez, as circumstances might dictate.

In some passages Mr. Ponsonby sees and even emphasizes the truth of this. He admits that Parliament has not only been "ignorant and powerless," but "has been content to remain so" (p. 48). He complains that constituents have sometimes actually expressed disapproval of their member taking an intelligent interest in the affairs of foreign countries (p. 110). The blame then lies rather with democracy than with diplomacy, but the charge itself is true. Agents often have to warn young candidates against "too much foreign policy." This is partly, no doubt, due to the mere narrowness of interest which always goes with lack of knowledge and weakness of imagination; partly, I think, it is due to a more special and perhaps temporary cause. For workingmen often feel an instinctive, and not unnatural, suspicion of the speaker who seems unduly interested in remote places and peoples. They can be roused, of course, by a full-blooded tale of atrocities; but, short of that, they are either bored or they suspect that the speaker has

some axe of his own to grind. And they know that he has led them on to ground where he can easily deceive them.

This attitude is, no doubt, regrettable. In a properly educated democracy it should be impossible. But it has most emphatically its good side, as I am sure Mr. Ponsonby would be the first to acknowledge. It is the outcome of a state of mind which has no fears, no aggressive designs, and no grudges against foreign nations; an insular state of mind which is concentrated on the improvement of our own national conditions, and is disposed to let other people look after themselves. I have often been struck, when conversing with foreigners, — Frenchmen, Germans, Italians, and above all members of the Balkan States, — by the vivid and detailed interest they show in alliances and combinations and possibilities of war, and the ready way in which they accept the fact that some nation or other is "the enemy." The average, moderate-minded Englishman is not at home in this atmosphere. He does not like to talk about wars and intrigues, and he will not calmly accept the suggestion that any nation is, as a matter of course, "the enemy." He has a feeling that the whole subject of foreign politics, as it is usually discussed, is unwholesome. It suggests trains of thought which had better not be in people's minds at all. There is obviously a great deal of somewhat confused wisdom in this feeling; and I am not surprised to find Mr. Balfour saying that, in his opinion, when once people "are fairly confident that the general lines pursued are not inconsistent with national welfare, then, I think, probably the less time given to foreign affairs the better" (p. 122). It is certainly a happy nation that need not think much about foreign affairs; it is probably a wise nation which, if it

has to think, does its thinking as rapidly and effectively as possible, and then occupies its mind with safer subjects.

However that may be, Mr. Ponsonby proves his point as to the bare fact. Our foreign policy has, since the settling-up of the Boer War, pursued its way almost unchecked, and to a large extent uncriticized, by Parliament or by public opinion. We are now landed in a great disaster, and Mr. Ponsonby assumes, without any present attempt at proof, that this disaster might have been avoided by a different foreign policy. He does not say what the right policy would at any point have been; that is not the subject of his book; but he believes that it might have been attained if the people of England had exercised a real and active control over the Foreign Office. That is, if I understand him aright, he believes that our policy would have been wiser and our influence for peace greater if the Foreign Secretary had always been compelled to ask himself, at each new step: "What will Parliament, what will my constituents think of this?" or "How will this look under the test of a general election?" He would admit, I presume, that such a policy must involve a certain loss in initiative, in decisiveness, and in rapidity. And he does not pretend that the ordinary mass of electors have more knowledge or more coolness or — I think — higher principles than Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey. But he does believe that, in spite of all drawbacks, this publicity, this constant reference to the plain man, would somehow have resulted in the production of a better spirit, and have let gusts of fresh and wholesome air into the stale corridors of diplomacy. I feel on this subject that the argument of the book fails to convince me.

There are several points, of course, which one willingly concedes to Mr. Ponsonby. If there had been democratic control in Germany, there would probably have been a Social-Democratic Government, or at least a liberal and peace-seeking Government. But in France and England there were already liberal and peace-seeking Governments, and in Russia a Government which, whatever may be thought of its nascent Liberalism, was at least most earnest for peace. The *Entente* Powers possessed already the pacific tone which Mr. Ponsonby's reforms profess to offer them. And it does not seem reasonable to apply a particular remedy to the peace-seekers because it would do good to the war-seekers. Again, most persons of experience will concede to Mr. Ponsonby that they have occasionally heard individual diplomats and empire-builders talk about foreign affairs in a reckless and intriguing spirit, which would certainly not be countenanced by the House of Commons or an average popular constituency. A great deal of such talk is not to be taken seriously. It is the form in which these people take their romance. But sometimes, no doubt, it represents real opinions, and sometimes the holders of such opinions do acquire a temporary and surreptitious influence over public affairs. But my own experience has been that, though they always dread the "Talking Shop" and the "British Public," they dread "Downing Street" as much or even more. And rightly so, for as a matter of history during the last century the Foreign Office has acted almost always as a drag on these forward or expansionist movements, and a far more effective drag than "the public" can be, for the mere reason that it knows more and is harder to deceive. The Foreign Office is normally engaged on a mass of useful and unobtrusive

work, which the public never cares to read about, from the settling of small disputes by small agreements to the clearing of international waterways and the preservation of hippopotami. And international friction is what it most detests.

This shows, I think, that the vital issue at stake in foreign politics is much more an issue between reason and unreason, between prudence and recklessness, between moderation and chauvinism, than, as Mr. Ponsonby insists on regarding it, between democratic and oligarchic sentiment. I suspect really that he and his friends have been misled by a false analogy. A great many abuses in the past have been remedied by a mere extension of the franchise or a letting-in of democratic fresh air. Cases of class privilege and class oppression, of indefensible favouritism or nepotism or traditional abuse, these and many others can be treated by the simple application of publicity and democratic control. These cases mostly occur in home politics, because there the most common conflicts are class conflicts; the facts, if not simple, are at least familiar; the issues to be decided are very largely moral issues, and the people are called in to give, not an expert, but a disinterested judgement. Now, as a general rule in foreign politics the very reverse holds good. The conflicts are seldom or never class conflicts; the facts and the whole state of circumstances surrounding the facts are unfamiliar, and cannot be understood without special study; the issues are seldom plain issues of right or wrong. Furthermore, the people of any one nation is, unfortunately, not disinterested. The disinterested arbitrator, whom analogy demands, is not any single "people," but the Concert of Europe — a different story altogether. Neither the

quality of disinterestedness, nor the kindred qualities of reasonableness, tact, self-control, and knowledge, which are specially required for the handling of foreign controversies, can be secured by any mere mechanical method such as the application of democratic control.

Of course, there are sometimes cases in foreign policy where the democratic remedy is indicated; cases where a Government is in some sense conspiring against the wishes of the people, or where a bureaucracy is, for the sake of avoiding friction, tolerating some outrageous wrong. In both types of case I think that our own political practice does insure publicity; certainly any notion that a British Government can really conceal from all eyes the main trend of its foreign policy is the wildest dreaming; but, if Mr. Ponsonby can suggest any method by which to increase our assurance in this matter, he will be working in the spirit of the Constitution as well as forwarding the cause of democracy, and we must listen to his proposal with all sympathy.

And here I will make my largest concession to him in the matter of our recent history. I think it is true, as he says, that owing to some extreme reticence in Ministers and other leaders of the nation, there grew up before the war a great divergence of expectation between the mind of the Foreign Office and that of the country, between those behind the scenes and the mass of outsiders. This divergence, I admit, was regrettable; but I do not think it arose from the cause which Mr. Ponsonby assigns. It was not because the Foreign Office was secretly aggressive and dreaded peaceful opinion. It was almost exactly the opposite. It was because the Foreign Office was straining every nerve for its twofold object, and it dreaded outside disturbance. Its object was, if possible,

peace; if peace failed, security. It was trying to appease the sensitiveness of all reasonable Germany and at the same time to guard against the intrigues of militarist Germany. It was negotiating with a half-declared enemy, armed to the teeth, demanding world-power and ready to spring, muttering demands which seemed vague and sinister and which yet were well worth satisfying if they were capable of being satisfied; a half-declared enemy who had once been a friend and might still by supreme tact and patience be reconverted to friendship; and in that crisis it did not want the coöperation of any one it could not trust. It told no falsehood and practised no intrigues. But it hid its difficulties; it spoke with a smiling face; it pretended always that things were less terrible than they were. And when at last the storm broke, we who had not been fully warned were amazed and angry, and some of us thought we had been cheated.

Let Mr. Ponsonby look again at the writings of the Haldane-hunters and the other wolves of Jingoism. What is it that they complain of? It is that again and again there were dangerous situations out of which they could have made capital, and Lord Haldane and the rest of the Government did not give them the opportunity. German agents worked up sedition in India, German money corrupted the gendarmes in Persia, German diplomats committed breaches of diplomatic honour; and the Government kept it all dark! All the yellow press was waiting outside the door, longing for information, only too anxious to help; all the people who wanted to turn out the Government, with civil war or without civil war; the schemers who wanted militarism for the sake of reaction, the lunatics who wanted trouble because they thought it fun. I quite admit that they would not have

had entirely their own way: the other side would have had its say also. But would there be much safety in that? Mr. Shaw would have rushed to preserve the peace with criticisms the reverse of sedative. Some Syndicalists and some Irishmen of extreme views would have expressed their preference for the foreigner over the English capitalist. Mr. Ponsonby himself . . . I would not for the world attack him. I believe he would have used all his influence absolutely and disinterestedly for good. But would he and his group, in a crisis like that, have supported the Government with real and effective friendship, have strengthened their hands and tried to show them that they could firmly count on the wholesome part of the nation? I believe they would; but I cannot blame the Foreign Office for doubting it. The nation as a whole would have been behind the Government. I have no doubt of that. But I believe that during those years the more thoughtful part of the nation actually preferred not to be consulted. And if any reader feels vehemently otherwise, I would ask him to look up the citations from the English press quoted in Reventlow's important book, "Deutschlands Auswärtige Politik," and then ask himself whether he would care to have such allies talking beside his Foreign Secretary when negotiations were peculiarly delicate.

"Then," Mr. Ponsonby may reply, "you confess quite frankly that you do not trust the people?" Trust is a limited, not an unlimited, quantity; but I could answer that question better if I knew exactly what it meant, if I knew whether Mr. Ponsonby was referring to an actual or an ideal people. For he, like the rest of us, varies between the two conceptions. At times he admits that the mass of the people is ignorant, indifferent, apt to be

swayed by gusts of passion and deceived by interested newspapers, and that the good of its participation in active politics chiefly depends on the extreme danger of trying to keep it out. At others he still speaks of that ideal people whose lineaments have really come down to us from Shelley and Godwin; which looks straight at all questions without prejudice or personal interest and, therefore, with universal good-will and unclouded moral judgement. When we think of "the people" as controlling our politics, do we mean a sort of residue which remains after removing all special classes and all persons of outstanding character or knowledge—a people which reads the yellowest type of newspaper and finds its heroes on the race-course and its politics in the music-hall? Or do we mean the sort of people which rises to the mind's eye as one returns from a meeting of the Workers' Educational Association or a particularly good trade-union discussion? And can Mr. Ponsonby see any way whereby the first people shall not snatch the decision out of the hands of the second? In nine cases out of ten, doubtless, the common sense of the nation will assert itself. I have no doubt of that. But in the tenth case, in the critical and exciting and specially dangerous case, with organized bad influences ready to play on public opinion? No; undesirable as secrecy is on a multitude of grounds, I cannot see that perpetual publicity, as such, is any safe road to the keeping of peace.

I grant, of course, fully that, in foreign affairs as in all the rest of politics, the will of the people must be supreme, and the ultimate control must be with the citizens of the country acting through Parliament. But I do not believe that increased democracy will serve as a substitute for character and wisdom, any more than an

artificially restricted franchise will. Our foreign politics are not below the average standard of the nation; I believe myself that they have been well above it. I believe that, under the present Foreign Secretary, our foreign policy has been conducted with as great care and prudence and with more than as great high-mindedness and resolute honesty of purpose, as that of any nation in modern history. But, if we are ever to rise to a foreign policy which shall be still higher, more daring and idealist, more ready to run risks for great ends, and more brilliant in meeting perils as yet far off and scarcely discernible, it will not be by any mere democratization of machinery; it will only be by some enormous change of heart, in which the masses of the nation must take part fully as much as their rulers.

I need hardly assure those who know Mr. Ponsonby that his concrete proposals are in no way either unpractical or revolutionary. In part, he merely calls attention to those reforms in the Foreign Office which have been recommended by the recent Civil Service Commission. Here every one will agree with him. Further, he proposes two changes in what we may call political procedure and one important, but not unreasonable, change in the Constitution. There is to be (1) an annual debate, occupying at least two days, on the Foreign Office Vote, in which the Foreign Secretary shall expound his whole policy. Besides this (2) it shall be the recognized duty of the Foreign Secretary to make periodical pronouncements in the country on foreign affairs, especially when Parliament is not sitting. These proposals could hardly be made compulsory, but they both seem desirable, so far as an outsider can judge.

The country would certainly be glad to have both the debate and the periodical speeches, and it is difficult to see that anything but good would in normal circumstances accrue to the Government. The sort of Foreign Secretary whose speeches would be a public danger would be sure to make them in any case. The change in the Constitution falls under three heads, and presents great difficulty. At present, as we all know, Parliament is a deliberative and legislative body; the executive power is vested in the Sovereign, acting through his Ministers. In practice, this sharp distinction is in many ways softened. A Government can be questioned about its executive acts, and cannot continue in existence if those acts are definitely disapproved by the House of Commons. The Home Secretary, for instance, can decide whether a particular condemned criminal shall be hanged or pardoned. If he knows the House wants the man pardoned, he can still hang him, but he does so at his peril; because, though the man will remain hanged, the Home Secretary will not remain Home Secretary. Consequently, he will never hang a man against what he believes to be the general feeling of the House, unless he has very strong reasons and is confident that he can justify his action.

Similarly, the Government has at present the power of (1) making a treaty, (2) making an agreement or alliance with a foreign country, and (3) declaring war. Mr. Ponsonby wishes to make all these powers dependent on previous consent of Parliament. The question is difficult and merits a full discussion. The case for Mr. Ponsonby's reform is obvious. There is certainly something anomalous in the conception that a Government, which cannot pass the smallest bill without full Parlia-

mentary debate, should be able to negotiate a treaty or form an alliance or even declare war without saying a word to any one. The case on the other side appears to rest on two arguments. First, there is a constitutional argument. Parliament is the Legislature, not the Executive. It is from every point of view unfitted for executive work. It contains the executive body and can dismiss it, but it must allow that body to do its own work in its own way. True, Parliament may have to allow many small things to be done against its wishes rather than take the drastic step of turning the Government out; but, it is argued, that arrangement just gives the Executive sufficient elasticity and power of real initiative. The discretion, no doubt, is larger in foreign affairs than in home affairs, but it is not different in quality. And foreign affairs, as a matter of fact, require that larger discretion.

The second is a practical argument. It is pointed out that to make treaties dependent on the approval of Parliament is greatly to weaken the bargaining power of the Government. For a treaty is always a matter of give and take; each party has to make concessions. And, obviously, a foreign Power will often be willing to make a concession when assured of a firm bargain, which it would not make if it had to take the risk of having the whole bargain thrown back on its hands. For example, in the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1907, Russia recognized our right to control the foreign relations of the Amir, which she had always disputed before. But would she have done so if she had known that the treaty as a whole was subject to the approval of the British Parliament, and that she might find herself in the position of having gained nothing, but given up an important point which

could never quite be recovered? The proposed limitation certainly weakens the Government's bargaining power; it also makes treaties harder to conclude. For after almost every important treaty, you find the respective Parliaments complaining that their own Minister has not driven a hard enough bargain. The Parliaments would thus be less likely to agree than the Ministers. And, further, a House which wants to quarrel with a Minister about other matters can often show its annoyance by rejecting a treaty; as, for instance, the United States Senate rejected the Arbitration Treaty with England. Considering that most treaties — especially if we remember the host of small but valuable treaties which attract no public notice — are attempts to settle international difficulties and remove causes of quarrel, while every treaty makes some demand upon international good-will, it would seem a deplorable thing to increase the obstacles in the way of concluding them.

Furthermore, it is pleaded that, as a matter of experience, there has been of late years in England no abuse of any of these special powers. Before the crisis of 1914 the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary were able to assure the House that "there was no secret engagement which they would spring upon the House. The House was free to decide in any crisis what the British attitude should be." (Grey, August 3, 1914.) The treaties concluded have mostly been treaties of arbitration or similar clearings-up; the main exception was probably the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, which, curiously enough, was announced to the Duma while still unknown to the British Parliament. As to declarations of war, Mr. Ponsonby quotes a startling statement from Homer

Lea to the effect that in the nineteenth century Great Britain embarked on no less than eighty wars with no prior declaration at all. This figure, if in any sense correct, must be obtained by counting every small expedition against a savage tribe as a war. Such expeditions are almost always caused by incidents which make declarations of war unsuitable. In the case of a war with any civilized nation it is almost unthinkable that a British Government should either begin a war without declaration, or declare war without having made sure of the overwhelming support of Parliament and the country. The whole course of proceedings in 1914, and earlier, shows with what iron determination Grey refused to make any agreement or alliance or promise on his own responsibility, without the support of Parliament, and how carefully the Government explained the whole situation to the House of Commons before taking any of the critical steps. True, if the House had insisted on preserving peace with Germany in 1914, Grey would presumably have resigned. That only shows that a Minister who does not possess the confidence of the House cannot continue in office.

Other countries, which possess written constitutions, have various rules limiting the power of the Executive in treaty-making. We, with our unwritten tradition, are probably in a transition stage. The Executive has in practice made a habit of carefully consulting the House, and, indeed, is attacked by critics both at home and abroad for hampering its own effectiveness by doing so. It is argued that if the British Government had had the courage to contract definite alliances and to announce definite lines of policy, without any reference to public opinion or Parliament, the European situation would

have been clarified and Germany saved from the blunder of trading too far upon our notorious indecision and pacifism. I do not share this view; but I incline to think that it is at least as plausible as Mr. Ponsonby's.

In the main, therefore, while believing that all Mr. Ponsonby's recommendations deserve sympathetic consideration, and some of them are almost beyond question right, I am not convinced that they would lead to any appreciable increase in the control exercised by the nation at large over foreign politics, much less that, if they had been put in practice ten years ago, they would have had the faintest effect in saving Europe from its present calamities. I do not wish to say that changes of procedure are not important things. In many ways they are. But the lack of effective democratic control over foreign politics is surely due to larger and deeper causes than these reforms can touch. The masses of the country, as Mr. Ponsonby repeatedly tells us, are not interested in foreign politics and do not want to hear about them. The lack of interest depends on lack of knowledge, and the lack of knowledge on lack of opportunity. The people who are interested in remote places are normally the few who happen to have travelled there, — a few officials, a few traders, and a few rich men with the taste for roaming. Even the countries nearest to us are seldom visited, and their languages seldom spoken, except by the leisured classes of society. It is hard to see any way out of this; the leisured classes must continue to have the interest and the knowledge, and therefore the main control. The working-classes, I fully agree, have every right to be suspicious and to appoint their Parliamentary watch-dogs. They have not been in any way betrayed, but they are quite right to take precau-

tions against being betrayed. I hardly see how they can do more.

Except, indeed, in one way: the way frankly recommended by Mr. Bertrand Russell in a little brochure published by the Labour press. His remedy is deliberately to make foreign policy a party question, and surround it with that exciting and inflammatory atmosphere which can be trusted to make the average voter attend. For the dullest or most abstruse subject becomes interesting as soon as our acquaintances begin fighting about it.

Of course, Mr. Russell has a theory which justifies his gospel of strife — the theory that our recent policy "represents merely a closing-up of the ranks among the governing classes against their common enemy, the people" (p. 70). But not being able to share that view, I confess that this proposal repels me. If the party fight comes about because of a real and grave difference of belief, then by all means let it come. There are cases where silence and acquiescence might be a greater evil than any strife of parties. But a deliberate encouragement of strife for the sake of attracting popular interest seems to me a deplorable thing even in home matters, and considerably worse in foreign. The inflammatory atmosphere may engender the necessary passion for overturning some obvious wrong; but it does not make for truth or understanding or justice, or the other qualities that are most needed in diplomacy. If the party in power is engaged on a policy which the party out of power considers really iniquitous, of course the latter is bound to protest and oppose, and to announce that when it gets into power its own policy will be different. But the fact of so violent a divergence between parties is in itself a misfortune. It drives both parties into dangerous

courses, and it clearly weakens the nation as a whole. For a nation's enmity becomes less formidable, and her friendship less attractive, when both are liable to be reversed at the next general election.

As a matter of fact, the continuity of our foreign policy since the South African War has been due, not to the special desire of the two parties to be amiable with one another, — they were singularly free from any such weakness, — but simply to the facts of the situation. After a difference which rent the nation in two, and which was settled on definitely Liberal lines, there arose a situation in Europe about which most well-informed persons, whether Conservative or Liberal, took more or less the same view. This is the fundamental fact which has ruled our whole policy. No doubt each of the two parties abandoned something of their special predilections. The imperialists accepted frankly the principle that the Empire must not be increased; the Liberals reluctantly agreed to enormous naval estimates. It is quite possible, now that the disaster we dreaded has come upon us, for each to imagine that if he had had his complete way, things might have been better. Personally I doubt it. And I think that, even if a slight twist in one direction or the other would have been an advantage, that lost advantage was more than compensated by the fact that our policy was known to be permanent and our word could be trusted by friend and foe.

"Then you are content, are you?" a reader may say to me. "The policy of our Foreign Office was ideally right, and the end to which it has led us is quite unobjectionable?" No; the end has been disaster. It has been shipwreck. But not every wrecked ship was

wrecked by the fault of its captain. I imagine that since August, 1914, almost every human being in Great Britain has tried, with whatever knowledge he possessed, to think what differences in our policy would have averted this war at some cost not greater than the war itself. And, so far as I have been able to read, no one has found a credible answer. Minor faults have been pointed out, odd lacks of information or energy or tact or initiative, such as are to be expected in a service containing vast numbers of men and spread all over the world; but no fundamental wrongness, no evil intent or folly. The fact seems to be that, if, some years ago, an angel had set himself to the task of saving Europe, he would not have begun by altering British policy. He would have begun by something quite else.

VII

HOW WE STAND NOW[1]

(March, 1916)

A FEW weeks ago I was giving a lecture to a certain Scandinavian society, and was asked after the lecture to sign my name in the society's book. As I looked through the names of the previous lecturers who had signed, I noticed the signature of Maximilian Harden. I inquired about his lecture — it was given before the war, in 1913 — and heard that it had been splendid. It had, in the first place, lasted two hours — a dangerous excellence — and had dealt with Germany's Place in the Sun. The lecturer had explained how Germany was the first of nations in all matters that really count: first in things of the intellect, in *Wissenschaft*, science, history, theology; first socially and politically, inasmuch as her people were at once the most enlightened and most contented, the freest and best organized and most devotedly loyal; first in military power and in material and commercial progress; most of all first in her influence over the rest of the world and the magic of her incomparable *Kultur*. She needed to expand and was bound to expand, both in Europe and beyond Europe. This could be achieved without difficulty; for Europe was already half conquered, and England had been very obliging, in the matter of colonies. So far the first hour and a half; then came the climax. This expansion would be of little use

[1] Address to the Fight for Right League.

if it were obtained by mere peaceful growth. Germany's power needed a stronger foundation. It must be built on a pedestal of war and "cemented with blood and iron."

This lecture, if it could be unearthed, would form a curious comment on Harden's recent utterances in favour of peace and good-will; but that is not what I wish to dwell upon. I want merely to take this doctrine as a sort of text, and carefully to consider its implications. I do not say for a moment that it is, or ever was, the doctrine of all Germany; but it is, I think, the doctrine that has prevailed. It is the doctrine of Bernhardi — a writer by no means so negligible as some critics have tried to make out. It is the doctrine of that very remarkable German Secret Paper which appears as No. 2 in the French Yellow Book. It is the doctrine of the leading German intellectuals represented by Rohrbach or by Naumann. And, what is more significant, it seems to me to be the doctrine generally held by pro-Germans in neutral countries. Such pro-Germans seldom discuss the negotiations of 1914 or the responsibility for the war. They take the bold line that Germany is the finest nation in the world, and has a right, by war or otherwise, to seize the first place. They tacitly accept the doctrine of Harden's last half-hour, except, of course, that where Harden expected to achieve his end by one short and triumphant war, they now with Dr. Rohrbach only expect to realize their full hopes "in this war, or the next, or the next, or the next after that!"

Now, what is our answer, speaking — if we can — not as indignant Britishers, but as thinking men who try to be impartial — what is our answer to Harden's claim? If Germany is really so superior to other nations, — and

she can make out, or could before the war, a rather plausible case, — ought we to check her? Ought we to strengthen a comparatively backward power, like Russia, against her?

Surely our reply is quite clear. If Germany is what she claims to be, she will get her due place by normal expansion and development. If she is growing in wealth, in population, in material, intellectual, and spiritual power, — no one will say she is hampered by undue modesty or lack of advertisement, — she will inevitably gain the influence she demands; she was already gaining it. We do not stand in her way except as legitimate rivals. We have not balked her colonial expansion; we agreed with her about the Bagdad Railway. But if, to make her claim firmer, she insists on war; if she seeks to build her empire upon innocent blood, then, both as a rival nation valuing our own rights and as civilized men in the name of outraged humanity, we meet force with force. We will show this empire which demands a foundation of blood and iron, that blood at least is a slippery foundation.

So much for the first question suggested by my text; now for a second. How does the existence of this doctrine and the fact of its wide acceptance bear upon the question of Peace? Have we blundered into this war, through the folly of our Governments, with no fundamental quarrel? or are we confronted with a deliberate policy — a policy backed by an army of ten to twelve millions, which we cannot tolerate while we exist as a free nation? It seems to me clear, and ever increasingly clear, that the governing forces in Germany are fighting in the spirit of Harden's speech, to create a world-power

which shall be, in the first place, hostile to ourselves, and, in the second place, based on principles which we regard as evil.

The ideal has been most clearly expressed in Naumann's remarkable book "Mitteleuropa," and in the immense discussion to which that book has given rise. Some German critics think that Naumann is too moderate in the East, some that he unduly neglects the colonies. But in general there emerges from the whole discussion the clear ideal of a united empire reaching from Antwerp to Bagdad, dominated, organized, permeated, and trained for war by the German General Staff, and developed economically by German trusts and cartels. It is the ideal of Rohrbach and the Intellectuals who write in *Deutsche Politik*. It is implicit in the old speeches of the Kaiser and Prince von Bülow. It is implicit equally in the recent speech of the present Chancellor, insisting that "any possible peace" must be based "on the war situation as every war map shows it to be."

The war situation on land already gives Germany her empire of Mitteleuropa! Her armies reach now from Antwerp to Bagdad, from Riga to the frontier of Egypt — that frontier which Rohrbach describes as "the throat of the British Empire," to be held always in Germany's grip. The colonies are gone; true. But if Germany is sufficiently strong in Europe, it is a maxim of German policy that colonies can be recovered.

A critic may say, "But this implies annexation; and the whole principle of annexation is being vigorously repudiated in Germany." Quite true. It is being repudiated; and not only by the Socialists, but by many bourgeois politicians and professors. There has been a curious unanimity, these last weeks, in the repudiation

of the annexation policy. What is the explanation of a phenomenon which seems so strangely, so suspiciously, gratifying?

Remember Austria before the war! She was willing to guarantee the territorial integrity of Serbia. She did not wish to annex territory; no, she wanted a Vassal State. That is the clue to the problem why Rohrbach and Harden want no annexation, why even the Chancellor is willing to consider a policy without annexations. Germany has no need of annexations if she can end this war as a conqueror, alone and supreme against a world in arms.

The Chancellor has explained that he is content not to annex Belgium, provided he can have guarantees that Germany shall have her "*due influence in Belgium.*" The same "due influence," I presume, which she now possesses in Turkey and Bulgaria, neither of which countries she has annexed. The same "due influence" which she will inevitably have, if peace is made on the basis of the present military situation, in Greece, in Rumania, in Sweden. And who imagines, after that, that Denmark or Holland can hold out? Peace on the basis of the present military situation establishes at a blow the empire of Mitteleuropa, and presents the professional German war-mongers with another successful war.

Let us here consider another objection. "If Germany is to gain this position by mere prestige, without any annexation," it may be suggested, "does she not clearly deserve it? Are we not wrong to object to it?" I answer, No, she does not deserve it, and we have the right to object. She claims that prestige on the ground that she has won the war; and that, we maintain, is a false ground,

because she has not won the war. We mean to see whether she can win. An interesting object lesson is now being worked out before the eyes of the smaller nations, those semi-civilized Balkan and Asiatic communities who have had so little experience of honest politics and such abundant experience of international scoundrelism. They are waiting to see whether the last word of political wisdom is to be found in the way in which Germany treated Belgium, and Austria treated Serbia, and both Powers treated the unhappy Balkan States at the time of the last Balkan War. They are waiting to see whether it is safe and wise to plot evil, to lie, to prepare, to spring upon your prey; or whether the great mass of decent human society is in the long run strong enough to beat down any nation that plays the assassin against its fellows.

That is how the knowledge of this policy bears on the question of Peace. A great Scandinavian shipbuilder the other day told me that he had one word of advice, and one only, to give us about the war. "Beat Germany this time," he said, "for, if you do not, next time she will beat you."

I will ask you now to face with me a third question, suggested not so much by Harden's actual speech as by the tone of my own criticism of it. I think Harden's programme wicked; I regard the political action and the whole manner of thought of the German leaders as both treacherous and cruel; I think and speak of it with indignation, and so do you. Now, have we any right to that tone?

I met in France lately an old friend of mine, who told me in a genial way that all such indignation was hypoc-

risy, pure hypocrisy. "Germany was perfectly right in all she had done, and if we had been clever enough to think of it, we would have done the same." And he challenged me with certain quotations from English and American writers, which I will put before you in a moment.

Now, we all know that our indignation is not hypocritical. Whether warranted or not, it is perfectly sincere. There is no question of that. But I wish, before answering my friend in detail, to make one frank admission. Our moral indignation is not hypocritical; but I admit that it is a dangerous state of mind. As soon as we begin to have that kind of feeling towards any national or personal enemy, a feeling of indignant scorn for some one else coupled with a conviction of our own great superiority, it is dangerous: we ought instantly to collect ourselves and bear in mind, at the least, the possibility that, "but for the grace of God, there go we and there goes Great Britain."

"If we had been clever enough, we would have done the same": let us see what, in this respect, Germany did. She forced on Europe a war that could have been easily avoided; she broke her treaty in a peculiarly treacherous way; she trampled on international law; she practised deliberate "frightfulness" on the civil population in Belgium and northern France; she twisted all the rules of war towards less chivalry and greater brutality; she slew unarmed civilians wholesale with her submarines and Zeppelins; and, if we are adding up her list of crimes, we should not forget the most widespread and ghastly of all, her deliberate starvation of Poland and her complicity in the unspeakable horrors of Armenia.

Would we, could we, as a nation, ever have done these

things? No one who knows England will really argue that we would actually have done them. But let us go further. Do we habitually harbour principles and use arguments which would justify our doing such things, if circumstances tempted us that way! As a nation I am clear that we do not; but I must face some of my friend's quotations.

As for the general theory: well, our late Field Marshal, Lord Roberts, was a great and chivalrous soldier, admired and loved by his fellow countrymen. Yet it seems that in his "Message to the Nation" he definitely praises and recommends for our imitation the doctrines of General Bernhardi, and particularly admires the German Government for pouring scorn on President Taft's proposals for arbitration treaties (pp. 8, 9). Well, I confess I wish Lord Roberts had not written thus. My defence must be the rather speculative one, that I do not believe he really accepted the doctrines that he seemed to preach. At any rate, you will not find anywhere in his long military life that he practised them.

Again, when we speak of "scraps of paper," I find that a certain English soldier, a member of my own clan, too, has expressed his opinions about them even more vigorously than Dr. Bethmann-Hollweg. He is speaking of our seizure of the Danish Fleet in 1807. "Nothing has ever been done by any other nation more utterly in defiance of the conventionalities of so-called international law. We considered it advisable and necessary and expedient, and we had the power to do it; therefore we did it. Are we ashamed of it? No, certainly not. We are proud of it." The writer is Major Stewart-Murray in "The Future Peace of the Anglo-Saxons." The history, of course, is incorrect, the language is

muddled; but the writer's general meaning is clear enough. And it is certainly not for him to throw stones at professed treaty-breakers.

My friend's next quotations are from Mr. Homer Lea. Now, I do not feel myself responsible for Mr. Homer Lea, because after all he is American, not English. But certainly, to judge by the quotations, his principles would warm the hearts of Attila or Admiral von Tirpitz. They would not, I think, have appealed to General Robert Lee, and I am certain would have horrified Homer. Even that most sinister sentence with which the horrors of Belgium were justified — the maxim that an invading army should "leave the women and children nothing but their eyes to weep with" — even that was not the invention of the Teuton. It was welcomed and carried into practice by them; but its invention belongs to an American general and it has been quoted with admiration by certain English writers.

Lastly, let us take two statements of what I may call the mystical creed of militarism. I want you to guess which of the two is German and which English. "War gives a biologically just decision, since its decisions arise from the very nature of things." And, again: "War is the divinely appointed means by which the environment may be readjusted till 'ethically fittest' and 'best' become synonymous." Which of those two is German? Which is the more remote from good sense? which the more characteristic in its mixture of piety and muddle-headedness? Well, I don't know what your guesses are but the first is from Bernhardi, and the second from Colonel Maude, on "War and the World's Life."

In "Punch" last week there was a cartoon representing a blundering Teutonic giant with a spiked club, ad-

vancing under the motto, "*Weltmacht oder Niedergang!*" Naturally, when any person is kind enough to give the rest of the world that choice, we all unanimously say, "*Niedergang*, if you please." Yet I find in the book of a well-known and kindly and learned English writer the statement that "a choice is now given to England, a choice between the first place among nations and the last; between the leadership of the human race and the loss of empire and of all but the shadow of independence."

Of course, one sees more or less what he means; but why exaggerate? Why insist on "leadership of the human race"? Why express the policy you advocate in terms which must necessarily exasperate Russia, France, the United States, and all the other great nations? Is that the way to get allies among nations of whom each one considers itself as good as you? Is it the spirit in which to conduct decent diplomacy, the spirit in which to deal fairly and reasonably with the other members of the great fraternity of Europe?

What, then, is the answer to my friend's challenge? I confess myself still unshaken by it. We must admit that these militarists, these enthusiastic spurners of international law, these eloquent would-be torturers of civil populations, these rejecters and despisers of arbitration and peace, do exist among us; they exist among us, but, thank Heaven and our own common sense, they do not control our Government. They are not England. In Germany, they have controlled the Government. And the world has seen the fruit of their principles when carried into action, in all its horror and all its helpless futility.

Plato always insisted — you will excuse a Greek

scholar for once referring to Plato — on the great complexity of human character. It is never One; it is always a mass of warring impulses; and his solution of the problem presented by that inward war was to maintain the character as an "aristocracy," in which the best forces should be uppermost and the lower ones beaten down. The same rule should apply both to the individual and to the State. I believe that — in Plato's sense of the word, which is, of course, quite different from its ordinary modern meaning — we do possess in Great Britain such an "aristocracy." Our better natures on the whole rule our public action; we give our national confidence to our better men. We have behind us a very great tradition. In peace we are the most liberal and the most merciful of all great empires; in war we have Napoleon's famous testimonial, calling us "the most consistent, the most implacable, and the most generous of his enemies." It is for us to keep up that tradition, and I believe that the men who rule us do keep it up. The main effort of the nation is high and noble, but in the strain and anxiety of this long war one becomes conscious of the struggle towards expression of something lower, something mean, angry, intemperate, hysterical, slanderous — the barbarian slaves, as Plato would put it, clamouring that the city itself shall be governed by barbarian slaves.

I take one case, not mentioning names because I do not wish to attack any individual, from the "Times" of a few days back. The children of interned aliens are fed by the Boards of Guardians on workhouse principles. With the rise of prices an increased grant was necessary, and was applied for by the Local Government Board. (It remained considerably lower than the allowance for the children of our own soldiers and sailors.) A certain

Member of Parliament asked Mr. McKenna if, before sanctioning the grant, he would give due consideration to the increasingly bad conditions under which British civilians were now forced to live at Ruhleben.

Mr. McKenna: The proposals of the Local Government Board have already been approved. In their treatment of prisoners and other enemy aliens in this country, His Majesty's Government are guided by the dictates of humanity and the principles of The Hague Convention.

Another honorable Member: Before the right honorable gentleman sanctions the increase, will he ascertain what grants are being given to the children of interned British prisoners in Ruhleben?

Mr. McKenna: I do not think the two cases can be weighed one against the other. No matter what other Governments may do, this Government will continue to be actuated by the principles of humanity.

The honorable Member: How does the right honorable gentleman expect to get better treatment for British prisoners in Ruhleben if he gives everything with both hands to the children of interned Germans here?

Mr. McKenna: I do not think my honorable friend states the case quite fairly. We believe ourselves bound by certain principles — the rules of The Hague Convention. We have acted honestly and fearlessly in conformity with those rules, and I hope the House will support the Government in so doing.

I choose this incident, not from any wish to attack the honorable Members involved, one of whom I know to be a quite kindly person, but because it just illustrates my argument. It shows a bad and foolish and un-English impulse struggling to obtain power and being very properly crushed. No reasonable person really imagines that cutting down the food of these children below what the Guardians think necessary will help us in the faintest degree to win the war; and, above all, that is not the way

in which Great Britain makes war, — or, please God, ever will make war, — by starving a lot of little enemy children whom we happen to have in our hands.

I wonder sometimes that people — especially people who write letters to newspapers — seem to have so little pride in their country. I suppose there is some psychological luxury in making vindictive suggestions of this kind, or in spreading wild accusations against one's leaders. But it is the sort of luxury that ought to be strictly cut down in time of war. It is misleading to other nations; and, with public servants as with others, you do not get the best work by incessant scolding. For my own part, I am more proud of Great Britain than ever in my life before, and that largely because, in spite of this froth or scum that sometimes floats on the surface, she is fundamentally true to her great traditions, and treads steadily underfoot those elements which, if they had control, would depose us from being a nation of "white men," of rulers, of gentlemen, and bring us to the level of the enemy whom we denounce or the "lesser breeds without the law."

Probably many of us have learned only through this war how much we loved our country. That love depends, of course, not mainly on pride, but on old habit and familiarity, on neighbourliness and memories of childhood. Yet, mingling with that love for our old country, I do feel a profound pride. I am proud of our response to the Empire's call, a response absolutely unexampled in history, five million men and more gathering from the ends of the earth; subjects of the British Empire coming to offer life and limb for the Empire, not because they were subjects, but because they were free and willed to come. I am proud of our soldiers and our

sailors, our invincible sailors! I am proud of the retreat from Mons, the first and second battles of Ypres, the storming of the heights of Gallipoli. No victory that the future may bring can ever obliterate the glory of those days of darkness and suffering, no tomb in Westminster Abbey surpass the splendour of those violated and nameless graves.

I am proud of our men in the workshop and the factory, proud of our men and almost more proud of our women — working one and all day after day, with constant overtime and practically no holidays, for the most part demanding no trade safeguards and insisting on no conditions, but giving freely to the common cause all that they have to give.

I am proud of our political leaders and civil administrators, proud of their resource, their devotion, their unshaken coolness, their magnanimity in the face of intrigue and detraction, their magnificent interpretation of the nation's will. I do not seek to palliate mistakes or deprecate criticism, so long as it is honest and helpful criticism. But, when almost every morning and evening newspapers professing to be patriotic pour in their attacks on these men who are bearing our burden, — attacks which will wither away and vanish with our first big victory, — I will venture to state one humble citizen's opinion: that, whether you look at the Head of the Government or whether you look at the great Secretaryships and Administrative Offices, from the beginning of the war till now, I doubt if at any previous period of English history you will find a nation guided by such a combination of experience, high character, and commanding intellectual power.

A few days ago I was in France in the fire-zone. I had

been at a field dressing-station, which had just evacuated its wounded and dead, and was expecting more; and, as evening was falling, full of the uncanny strain of the whole place and slightly deafened with the shells, I saw a body of men in full kit plodding their way up the communication trenches to take their place in the front line. I was just going back myself, well out of the range of guns, to a comfortable tea and a peaceful evening; and there, in trench after trench, along all the hundred miles of our front, day after day, night after night, were men moving heavily up to the firing-line, to pay their regular toll of so many killed and so many wounded, while the war drags on its weary length. I suddenly wondered in my heart whether we or our cause or our country is worth that sacrifice; and, with my mind full of its awfulness, I answered clearly, Yes. Because, while I am proud of all the things I have mentioned about Great Britain, I am most proud of the clean hands with which we came into this contest, proud of the Cause for which with clear vision we unsheathed our sword, and which we mean to maintain unshaken to the bitter or the triumphant end.

VIII

IRELAND

I. The Dublin Insurrection

(June, 1916)

I WRITE of this question as an English Liberal whose father was an Irish Catholic and a friend of Daniel O'Connell. I have all my life been a devoted Home Ruler, a follower of Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Asquith, and Mr. Redmond. All these leaders are loyal Britishers, and believe that Home Rule is good both for Ireland and for the whole British Empire.

What was the cause of the Dublin insurrection of April last? The delay of Home Rule, causing widespread disappointment and mistrust; the bad example of the Ulster Party before the war, with their importation of arms from Germany and their open threats of civil war if Home Rule was passed; and lastly, the constant seditious propaganda of the avowed enemies of England, whether old Fenians and "physical force men" or paid tools of the Germans.

Why was Home Rule delayed? Because it was so difficult to carry. The Liberals proposed the first Home Rule Bill in 1886, and were thrown out of office upon it. They got it through the House of Commons in 1892, and were defeated in the Lords. After a long period of defeat they carried it three times through the House of Commons between 1910 and 1914, and meantime passed the

"Parliament Act," overriding the veto of the House of Lords. So at last in 1914 Home Rule was ready to come into law. Then came the last ditch, the armed opposition of almost all the Protestants of the Northeast corner of Ireland. These Ulstermen, led by Sir Edward Carson, refused to accept any compromise or amendment, but merely declared that they would not accept Home Rule, and, if it were passed, would declare a civil war. They proceeded to drill and to import arms from Germany.

What was Mr. Asquith, then Prime Minister and leader of the Liberal Party, to do? His object was to pacify Ireland; and it appeared that four fifths of Ireland threatened permanent disaffection if Home Rule was not granted, while one fifth threatened instant civil war if it was granted. With immense patience and public spirit he tried to bring both parties to accept some compromise, but did not succeed until the war with Germany broke out. Then, under the stress of a common and terrific danger, both sides accepted a compromise. The Home Rule Bill was passed into law, but it was not to come into operation till after the war; and before it came into operation an amending bill was to be passed which should enable Ulster to stay outside the bill. Home Rule was thus again postponed.

Next came the Coalition. Mr. Asquith thought the country would be more united in the work of the war if all parties joined in the Government. The new Government was composed of Liberals, Tories, and Labour men in proportion to their numbers in the House. Among the Tories in the new Government was Sir Edward Carson, who had declared that he would lead a civil war rather than accept Home Rule. The Irish Na-

tionalists began to lose faith; it looked as if they would never get Home Rule at all. True, Carson very soon left the Government, but all the Tories had been pledged against Home Rule; and though they declared, quite honestly, that they would abide by the compromise of 1914, it was easy for mischief-makers in Ireland to sow mistrust. These mischief-makers, partly in German pay, partly disaffected fanatics, kept up an underground propaganda, saying that England would break all her promises, that the English Liberals were frauds, that the Irish Nationalists under Redmond were a stale old crew of politicians, run by "the priest, the publican, the 'gombeen-man,' and the English M.P." Thus, all was ready for treason, and treason came in a very abrupt and bloody form.

There are three main parties in Ireland: (1) The Constitutional Nationalists, under Redmond, loyal to the British connection, but determined above all things to win Home Rule by Parliamentary and legal methods. They generally work with the English Liberals. (2) The Ulster Protestants led by Carson, including the Orangemen and the few Protestants in the other parts of Ireland, professing extreme loyalty and refusing to be in any way separated from Great Britain, but ready to fight against Great Britain rather than be made part of a Home Rule Ireland. They are supported by most of the English Conservatives. (3) Conspirators and avowed enemies of England, including some Sinn Feiners, some old Fenians, and some revolutionaries, who were intriguing to help the Germans or any one else who would injure the British Empire.

Now, it is obvious that ordinary loyal Britishers can have no dealings with this third class, least of all at a

time when we are fighting for our lives, and thousands of loyal Irishmen, both Catholic and Protestant, are giving their lives for us in the trenches. And further it is obvious that, whenever the constitutional demand for Home Rule seems to fail and the Irish begin to lose hope, this third party of treason and violence will be strengthened. It is to this third party that Casement and the Dublin rebels belonged.

Roger Casement had been in the British consular service all his life. He had done good work, received promotion, been treated with confidence, been awarded a knighthood, and had written a letter of almost excessive gratitude for it to the Government. Just before the outbreak of the war he got away from England, crossed to Germany, and gave the Germans all the information he was able to give to help them in destroying us. In particular he was employed to seduce from their allegiance all Irish soldiers who were prisoners in Germany. These poor fellows were promised immediate freedom and high pay if they would join the Germans and help to invade Ireland; they were fed with the most detailed and infamous lies against England; if they accepted Casement's proposals their food allowance was increased; if they refused his proposals, they were starved. To their infinite credit it must be said that only some forty or fifty men out of several thousands gave way. On the contrary, Casement was more than once hooted out of the camps and had on occasion to be protected from the indignant prisoners by a German sergeant. On one occasion, one of his associates offered, for a payment of five thousand pounds, to betray Casement to the British Government. The offer was, of course, accepted. Whatever one may think of the man who offers to betray his

associates, no Government in the world would refuse such an offer if it was made to them. The man, however, did not carry out his plan.

At last all was ready. On April 20, Casement was landed on the west coast of Ireland from a German cruiser, laden with arms. The cruiser was caught by British destroyers and sank itself to conceal something that it contained; the crew was saved. Next day Casement was arrested near the shore with a companion, heavily armed and giving a false name. On the 24th a bloody little rebellion broke out in Dublin. All police and soldiers — even wounded soldiers from the hospitals — were shot down at sight, and a great number of peaceful citizens killed or wounded. The dead amounted to some hundreds. At the same time a German squadron attempted a raid on the east coast of England, but was routed by the local destroyers and small craft. There was an unsuccessful rising at Enniscorthy which was put down by the spontaneous action of the Irish Nationalist Volunteers. There were attempts at risings in other parts of Ireland and attempts against the railways in England. It was not till May 1 that the whole rebel force surrendered unconditionally. During a whole week Dublin had lived under a reign of terror. For the rising, though containing a number of leading Sinn Feiners and sentimental Irish enthusiasts, was chiefly carried out by wild Labour men, who had been disowned by the trade-unions, and by actual criminals. These men used explosive bullets and committed some acts of great cruelty.

The German raid was defeated, Casement arrested, the rebels in Ireland put down. What was to be done next? Two answers were possible. "Punish the rebels," said the Ulstermen and the English Conservatives;

"annul the Home Rule Bill; send forty thousand troops to Ireland, and uphold the law. Let there be an end of paltering with treason." "Grant Home Rule at once," said the Nationalists and the English Liberals; "remove all possible excuses for mistrust. And — guilty as they are — give pardon to all the rebels you possibly can." What was Mr. Asquith to do? His whole object was to pacify Ireland, and that could be done only by finding a course to which both parties would, however reluctantly, agree. The course ultimately approved was (1) to punish a small number of the rebels, who had personally been most deeply engaged in the bloodshed, and so maintain the rule of the law. Sixteen men were thus put to death. (2) To satisfy the national demand of four fifths of Ireland by putting Home Rule into force at once. All "loyalist" or Protestant Ireland had been roused to fury by the Dublin insurrection, and it was almost impossible to win their consent to this grant of Home Rule. It was hard also to persuade the Nationalists to make any concessions. However, Mr. Lloyd George was set to the work of persuading both parties in Ireland to agree to some settlement. If the rebels had not been punished Ulster would not have listened to him.

At last Lloyd George induced the Ulstermen to agree to Home Rule for the rest of Ireland on condition that Ulster should not be forced into the scheme without her consent, and the Nationalists to agree to the exclusion of Ulster provided the whole arrangement should be reconsidered by an imperial conference after the war. This was the basis of a compromise which had then to be laid before the Cabinet, and which unfortunately came out of the Cabinet in a slightly different form from that

with which it went in. A fierce dispute is now raging about the changes in the scheme; but they seem to me to be only points of detail and easily capable of arrangement by sensible men. The main point that remains is the question of Casement's fate.

He was tried for high treason in London in June. He had a fair and even a generous trial. His advocate, Mr. Sullivan, was allowed unusual latitude. A special arrangement was made to allow a distinguished American lawyer to come and take part in the defence. But of course there was no real defence possible. If ever there was a clear case of high treason, it was this, nor can one discover any extenuating circumstances except possibly the prisoner's previous services to the country he had now betrayed. If you take the ground of open hostility to England, and argue that any act of rebellion by an Irishman is meritorious in itself, you can excuse Casement. But that is not a ground that any English tribunal, or any impartial tribunal, can be expected to take. On grounds of justice there is no doubt whatever of Casement's guilt, and no reason why he should not be put to death, like any other traitor.

It is entirely a question of policy; entirely a question of what will be the effect on Ireland. The Conservatives argue — with much justice — that the law has too long been despised and disobeyed in Ireland. The Government must assert the law, and show they are not afraid. Above all, they must not pardon the most guilty of all the rebels after executing many of his dupes, just because he is a man of some wealth and position with a title and a gallant past. The Liberals tend to retort that an execution goes badly with an attempt at pacification. Too much blood has already been shed in Ireland,

especially by the rebels themselves. An act of mercy does little harm in any case, and Casement is less dangerous living and pardoned than dead and transformed into a martyr.

For my part, I leave the question to Mr. Asquith. Mr. Asquith has no vindictiveness in him and is never swayed by passion. I know he will think of nothing but the granting of Home Rule, the pacification of Ireland, and the reconciliation of the two warring parties. Compared with those aims I care very little whether Casement lives or dies; and, to do him justice, amid all his treachery, I believe that he himself cares as little.

II. The Execution of Casement

(August 3, 1916)

I wrote the foregoing words in New York in July, while Casement's fate was still in the balance. About a week later he was hanged. The royal prerogative of pardon was not exercised. For my own part, not having attended the Cabinet council at which the final decision was reached, I cannot tell how I should have voted had I been there and heard the arguments; but I freely admit that I should have gone to the discussion with the intention of voting for a pardon.

On what ground? It is somewhat hard to say. Certainly not on any ground of justice. There never was a clearer case nor a fairer trial. Nor yet from that fine, if somewhat unreasoning, sense of decency and chivalry which makes the British Government spare the Countess Markievitch and steadily refuse to execute female spies. Not from the sort of personal pity which made Lord

Grey intervene on behalf of the American boy who was caught acting as a German spy in England, and sent him home to his parents. Not from that admiration for a stout fighter and a brave enemy which made Captain Müller of the Emden rather a hero in England, and which has twice saved De Wet. Not because Casement was an ignorant man seduced into evil courses, on which ground the court acquitted his fellow prisoner, Bailey. Neither could one plead for Casement's pardon on the ground that he was deranged in mind like that other unhappy Irishman, Lieutenant Coulthurst, who shot Mr. Sheehy-Skeffington and two other prisoners because a voice from Heaven so directed him, and who is now among the criminal lunatics at Broadmoor. Alienists were sent to examine Casement, but none could find any insanity in him. Least of all would I seek to pardon him because there were press campaigns on his behalf in neutral countries. I should be sorry to seem in any way discourteous to my journalist friends on either side of the Atlantic, but I do think it would be a bad day for justice if legal sentences were to be reversed in America to please English newspapers, or in England to please American. It is certainly not the Irishman in me that would have pressed for his pardon. I regard Casement as one of the worst and most cruelly reckless enemies that Ireland has had for the last fifty years, and I believe that most Nationalists agree with me. As the son of an Irishman and a lifelong Home Ruler, I boil with indignation when I think how Casement's crazy treason has deluged Dublin with unforgettable blood and perhaps ruined forever a cause that was almost won.

I should have voted for pardoning him because, with the part of me that is English and Liberal, I feel still a

sense of ancient hereditary guilt towards Ireland, and have an instinctive desire to seize every possible opportunity for magnanimity towards Irish rebels. In general we British are good governors and even popular, so far as governors are ever popular. A vast experience has eventually taught us our lesson. But we went to Ireland before we, or any other Power, had learned either to govern or to assimilate dependencies oversea; we made all the usual mistakes, committed the usual crimes, and have left a state of permanently inflamed feeling which it will take many generations of wisdom and sympathy to live down. And every drop of Irish blood spilt by English law, however justly, seems to rouse the sleeping furies of all the Irishmen unjustly slain by England since the days of Elizabeth and Cromwell.

On this ground I should have voted for pardoning Casement.

With these thoughts in my mind I happened to read an article in the "New York Times" on Sunday, August 13, by an Irishman whom I regard with every respect and sympathy, Mr. John Quinn. Part of it is an impassioned defence and eulogy of an old friend to whom Mr. Quinn, in spite of a recent breach, remained deeply attached. On all that part of the article I have nothing to say. Casement's character is to me an enigma. The evidence — even the pre-war evidence — about it is violently conflicting; but it is greatly in his favour that many of his oldest associates, who ought to know him, feel towards him as generously as Mr. Quinn does. But other parts of Mr. Quinn's statement seem to me to illustrate what I said above: a drop of Irish blood spilt by Englishmen rouses all the furies of the past.

Mr. Quinn's reason is pro-Ally, and I think I may even

say pro-British. The last paragraph of his article is an eloquent appeal on behalf of the Allied cause. But the tragic end of Casement has roused in him just that ancient, and, if I may say so, unreasoning, bitterness towards England which otherwise had fallen asleep.

What are the reasons he urges to show that Casement should have been spared? I do not wish to speak slightingly of them, but really they form a curious collection. And as you study them you see that they are none of them reasons connected with justice or even with that reasoned mercy which normally influences the Crown in its prerogative of pardon. They are at worst based on the hypothesis that any act committed by an Irishman is pardonable so long as he commits it from hatred of England; at best they are the sort of arguments that are, sometimes, in bad cases, submitted to a French jury in defence of a *crime passionné*.

Casement did commit high treason against Great Britain. But then "he regarded the British Government as his country's permanent and irreconcilable enemy." He did not love Germany. "No single action of mine," he wrote, "has been an act for Germany"; only Germany happened to serve his hatred of England! He acted from pure hatred. Is that any special reason for not letting the law take its course? Similarly, when he tried to seduce the Irish captives in Germany from their allegiance, and was rejected and scorned by the enormous majority of them, "it is an abominable falsehood" to say that Casement got the recalcitrant prisoners' rations reduced, or, I suppose, got certain individuals among them shot. Casement was perfectly innocent! He merely walked away, protected by a German sergeant, and it was the Germans who starved or

shot the disobedient prisoners! Not a very satisfying defence, I think. And it seems regrettable that two of these starved Irish prisoners, who were afterwards exchanged as incurable, continued to believe this "abominable falsehood," and sent a message to the Prime Minister that they regarded Casement as their murderer.

Again, Mr. Quinn quotes some edifying sentences in which Casement explains that "loyalty rests on love," and that government should be based on love, not on restraint. Such sentiments are almost common form nowadays among the worst stirrers-up of fraud and hatred! There is hardly a Nationalist in Ireland who will not smile bitterly at this praise of "love" from one who set himself savagely to prevent the growth, not only of love, but even of decent peace and good feeling between Irish and English. I wonder if the Irish prisoners in Germany thought of him as an apostle of love?

The legality and the fairness of Casement's trial are admitted — except apparently that even justice is unjust if it comes from Englishmen — and Casement himself did not really deny his treason. Yet Mr. Quinn repeats some half-hearted suggestions made by the prisoner's counsel. He admits that Casement did seduce prisoners in Germany, with German help, from their allegiance, and formed them into an Irish brigade which was inspected and approved by German authorities. But his intentions, it is pleaded, were quite harmless: "he never intended them to help Germany"! Mr. Quinn is a lawyer; does he know many juries who would accept that statement?

Lastly, "in Casement's insurrection not a drop of blood was shed." This is really a little brazen. Case-

ment landed from a German submarine on April 20, intending to stir up a rebellion in the West; the rebellion broke out in Dublin on the 24th; at the same time the German fleet made an unsuccessful raid on the east coast, and attempts were discovered to cut the English railway lines.[1] And we are asked to believe that all these events had nothing to do with one another and that Casement has no responsibility for the three hundred men and women killed and more than a thousand wounded in Dublin!

No. I would myself have been disposed to pardon Casement, but I cannot see the ghost of a doubt about his guilt, nor yet about the fairness of his trial. I cannot see any extenuating circumstances in the case of Casement, beyond those that can be pleaded for all political criminals from Guy Fawkes to Booth. My only reason would be that reluctance ever, if one can possibly help it, to put any Irishman to death for offences against England, that anxiety to atone for the harshness of the past by extreme tenderness in the present, which moves most liberal Englishmen in their feeling towards Ireland. I accept Mr. Quinn's parallels from Germany and Austria. I do not for a moment think that the English Government of Ireland for the last century has been at all like that of Germany among her Poles or of Austria among her Slavs. But a century earlier it was so, and I accept the parallel. I do not in the least blame the Austrian Government for executing the assassins of the Archduke, provided she gave them a fair trial first, and only punished those really guilty. The most I should dream of asking from that Austrian tribunal would be a certain leniency to the very young or misguided, and

[1] I myself was one of a party called out to guard the Great Western.

extreme care in every case where there was a shadow of doubt.

"But at least," Mr. Quinn may retort, "you would have admired or praised the criminals, who were rightly striving to be free?" Not exactly. I would judge them far less harshly than ordinary private murderers, just as I do Casement; because, however wrongly, they thought they were working for their country and had suffered gross oppression. The rest would depend on a multitude of questions. How far were they disinterested; how much were they really oppressed; how brave or cruel, devoted or treacherous, was their action; what reasonable chance was there of its leading to any good result? I will, and do, weigh all those questions on behalf of Sir Roger Casement. I am sure he was brave and in a sense disinterested; but I do not think he was at all seriously "oppressed,"[1] I do not think his plot had any reasonable chance of doing good, and I cannot acquit him of some cruelty and treachery.

Mr. Quinn foretells that he will be a popular hero in Ireland, his faults forgotten, his virtues and good looks idealized. That is very likely, indeed. It would remain likely if Casement had been the greatest scoundrel in Christendom, and all that his enemies said of him were proved true. Mr. Quinn knows enough history to realize the freakishness of popular fame in these matters. One cannot acquit or pardon a guilty man because he would make a good hero for a novel.

[1] The act of oppression about which he seems to have felt most bitterly was the decision that the Atlantic mail steamers should cease to call at Queenstown. I do not know the merits of this question, nor whether the initiative came from the steamship companies, or the Government. But it is not the sort of "oppression" that can be wiped out only by blood.

No. I can find no ground for pardon, except that one ground which I have mentioned. I even doubt whether, if the Government had spared Casement on the mere cynical ground of trying to please Irish opinion, they would have got the price of their weakness. Our opponents were ready for either event. Since he is hanged, he is to be a stainless martyr; had he been spared, he would have been an English spy, who had got up the rising to give the English a chance of massacring Irishmen. At the best, he would have been let off because of his social position and his Protestantism. I heard the subject discussed myself, and know that these lines were to be taken.

But what of American opinion? American opinion, on the whole pro-Ally and not by any means anti-British, would certainly have welcomed Casement's pardon. Yes, and so should I. But I think that American opinion in these grave matters suffers from one very serious weakness. To us the war is a reality; to neutrals it is largely a spectacle. To American onlookers an Irish rising is a romantic episode; to us, in our long death-grapple, it is a cruel stab in the back, all the more cruel because it was provoked by no oppression, only by our supposed dangers; because it was stirred up by deliberate hatred after Home Rule was already passed and on the statute book; because the man who meant to lead it was one whom we had taken into our political counsels, trusted and treated with honour.

Our business is a very serious one; we have to do the right thing, the wise thing, not the thing that will be most applauded in the gallery. American opinion is generous, generally disinterested, rather romantic. Its gallery is well situated, but rather distant from the real

stage. It likes fine gestures and brilliant stunts. It likes to see the little chap hit the big one, and tends to boo the big one if he hits back. It only makes matters worse if the big chap had beforehand the name of being a generous sort of fellow; the gallery will boo him whenever he does not fully live up to his name. His enemies, fortunately for them, have no reputation left. They need not live up to anything.

After all, the big chap has got to use his full strength and means to do so. He has big enemies as well as little ones. And, big as he is, he has no such vast store of superfluous muscle. Blame him by all means if he cheats or bullies; but it is hard to blame him very much because in a great danger he does not always spare his enemies.

III. The Future of Ireland

(March 18, 1917)

So all is well as regards Ireland? I am content, am I? with the record of British statesmanship in that island?

No. I consider the state of Ireland utterly disastrous, a disgrace to British statesmanship, a mockery to our high professions, and an extreme peril to the Empire.

All that I assert strongly in our defence is that the Irish Question is not a question between two nations; it is an internal question. It is not the case that England is refusing self-government to Ireland. Almost all England, converted slowly and by bitter experience to the old Liberal policy, would give Ireland self-government to-morrow and be thankful. The trouble is that the strongest and most prosperous corner of Ireland still

threatens civil war if Irish self-government is granted, while all the rest of Ireland is seething with disaffection because it is not granted.

The situation is not in the least like that between Austria and Bosnia, Austria and Bohemia, Germany and Lorraine, Russia and Poland. It is not England coercing Ireland; it is one part of Ireland, recklessly backed by a small reactionary party in England, blocking the will of the rest.

Nearly all the leading English Unionists have publicly admitted their conversion. Mr. Bonar Law himself, once the leader of the pro-Ulster irreconcilables, is plaintively begging the Irish to say what sort of Home Rule they can agree upon. Mr. Garvin, perhaps the best and most respected of Tory journalists, tells the Government that it is disgraced if it cannot solve the Irish Question, and produces a very good Home Rule scheme of his own. The versatile Lord Northcliffe, whose journals simply wallowed in bloody insurrection in 1914, now makes Home Rule speeches at an Irish dinner. They are all Home Rulers, if only the Irish will agree among themselves what sort of Home Rule they will be so obliging as to accept.

I do not wish to excuse the English Tories, much as I respect many individuals among them. They prevented the settlement of the Irish Question till disaster occurred, and their change of heart comes a little late. But our business is with the future, not with the past. Why is it that an Irish settlement is so difficult?

The fault does not lie with the Irish Members. Mr. Redmond and his followers have behaved with a broad-minded patriotism which is rare in political history.

They have sunk their personal feelings, they have submitted to strange insults and humiliations, they have imperilled their whole position as leaders of Irish opinion, in order to serve unreservedly the cause of the Allies. Those of military age, and some who were well beyond it, have voluntarily enlisted or taken commissions. Some have been killed. The speeches of one or two of these Irish soldier M.P.s, such as Major W. Redmond and Captain Stephen Gwynne, have wrung the hearts of every decent Englishman in the House. Meantime the Irish regiments have fought in the cause of the British Empire with a desperate valour which ought surely to have earned a hundred times over the freedom of their own little nation.

In the opposite scale there is nothing to be set except a few outbreaks of bitter speech, seldom unjustified, from Mr. Dillon and others; a certain fractiousness among the Irish free-lances, like Mr. Ginnell; and now, at last, after thirty months of continued disappointment, the formal protest of the whole party against the Government.

"We could trust the Irish party," some Tories may say, "but we cannot give the Government of Ireland to the Sinn Fein. And we are told that Redmond has lost his influence, since the Dublin rebellion."

There is something in this argument. During the last few years a new party or rather a great new stream of thought has silently grown to importance in Ireland. The regular Nationalist Party had begun to suffer from its own success, as well as from its failure. Its success made it all-powerful in Ireland, leaving Ulster aside. Consequently, critics aver, its *morale* deteriorated. The

jobbers and time-servers who used once to persecute the Nationalists when they were weak, now joined them and got offices among them. The saloon-keepers — a terribly powerful class in Ireland — all rushed into the National League and were apt to be local chairmen and committeemen. The great agitators grew elderly and stiff in the joints, and began to think more about retaining their power than of leading their people to the light. In Ireland, as in all nations where the government comes in a foreign guise, there is a very low standard of honesty in dealing with public money. Public service is apt to present itself rather in the light of fat jobs to collar or distribute, and the best way to secure the jobs was to belong to the National League. It is impossible for a stranger to judge how much of this description is true; it is certainly in the air in Ireland.

Ireland has never been poor in idealists, especially in those of the unpractical sort. The more impulsive young men and women, idealist, cranky, rebellious, malcontent, disappointed, or whatever they were, began to turn away from the National League and the Parliamentary Party and what seemed to them the narrow-minded tyranny of the priests. Their energies found outlet in different channels. There was a great revival of the Irish language. There was a great study of Irish antiquities, a revival of idealized Irish history. Hundreds of young clerks and shop-assistants after a hard day's work would gather at night to study these severe subjects and to attune their minds to the supposed purity and unworldliness of that Ancient Ireland which formed the antithesis of the sordid modern world. All that was modern and sordid they called "English" and associated with the English connection: prosiness, money-bags, Dublin Castle and

its police, dirty publicans and gombeen-men, fat, corrupt aldermen prating of Nationalism, stupid priests and the "Freeman's Journal" and snubby elderly gentlemen and time-servers in general. That was all English, and the opposite of it was true Irish, the mark of that Ireland that had once been in the idealized past and must surely be born again if they only remained true to themselves. Let their motto be *Sinn Fein, "We Ourselves,"* and their rule of life be to reject all the compromises and temptations and pollutions of the great, ugly, English-ridden world.

There was much absurdity, of course, in this movement. I have known enthusiasts for the revival of the ancient Irish language who could not, for the life of them, manage to learn it. They could just learn to write their names in it, to look well on posters when they addressed popular meetings. Others, who really could speak Irish, used to get into quaint situations by refusing to speak English. I myself was once cursed by a branch of the Gaelic League. The curse was in Irish, but the Secretary was obliging enough to enclose a French translation of it, explaining that he would not demean himself by using the English dialect. He came to dinner a few days later and was extremely agreeable. The last I heard of him, he was fined two pounds for refusing to answer a policeman in any language but Irish.

There was also, besides the idealism and besides the absurdity, an element of extreme danger. To reject compromise is all very well if you are absolutely right; but it becomes deadly dangerous if you are, like most other human beings since the creation of the world, a little wrong in your foundations. It is so easy to think you are heroically striking down triumphant Evil and

then find that you have only murdered a good-natured policeman, with several children, while he was lighting his pipe.

The great mischief wrought by Sinn Fein has been to destroy the hopes of the constitutional Home Rule movement. The quarrels which are the bane of Irish politics began soon to affect it. The Sinn Feiners directed their special hatred towards the Irish Parliamentary Party. It was contemptible to go trafficking with England about Ireland's liberties. No true Irishman ought to enter the doors of a British Parliament. Home Rule would be worthless if they got it. It would still leave them dependent on England. Complete separation was the goal, and the method was simply to ignore England's existence. Let their elected M.P.'s stay in Ireland and form a separate body; let them all refuse to pay British taxes or obey British laws, and oppose a passive resistance to all England's attempts to exert authority. As for the Nationalist Members, no doubt it was a pleasant enough job for them, to draw four hundred pounds a year and have a good time in London, hobnobbing with English Liberals and pretending to work for a Home Rule that never came and never would come. The true way to serve Ireland was to die for Ireland. Let the Nationalists do that, and Ireland would follow them!

The taunt was essentially foolish, and all the more unfair, since at the time thousands of brave Irishmen were really fighting and dying in the common cause, convinced that in saving France and England they would save Ireland too. But the state of mind which produced it was a dangerous one.

When the rising in Dublin came, one of the things

that surprised many observers was the ferocity shown by various boys and young women. Young women committed unprovoked murders, lads shot wounded soldiers in their hospital clothes, boys of fourteen refused to surrender and fought to the death. Such is the effect on crude and unbalanced minds of a gospel of hatred embittered by small irritations and persecutions. It explains how a small section of the Sinn Fein, educated and in some ways high-minded men, allowed themselves to be dragged into a mad and criminal enterprise, which was certain to recoil heavily against their country. A few old, embittered Fenians, some gangs of Dublin roughs, and a number of the malcontents left behind by some desperate strikes in 1914 account for the rest of the rebels.

The rising took a week to put down, and at the end of it sixteen men were executed. It was not a large number. There can have been very few cases in history where so serious an outbreak has been followed by so few executions. But Ireland is a great sounding-board, and the sixteen executions have reëchoed through the world. Austria, I believe, has executed over ten thousand Bohemians since the war began.

But no Government sheds blood in Ireland with impunity. The sixteen are now martyrs, and the moving details of their deaths have become household words.

In considering the Irish Question a man finds himself continually saying, "It would be all right if only so-and-so had not happened!" If only Carson had not been allowed to preach civil war; or if only there had not been the Dublin rising; or, even after the rising, if there had

not been the executions; or, even after the executions, if only there had not been wholesale imprisonments of suspects till the jails were crowded! And now people say, since most of the suspects were fairly soon released, if only there had not been the deportations of Sinn Feiners without trial! (Some people add, if only Dublin Castle and the British War Office were gifted with tact and sympathy when dealing with individuals whom they do not like: but the people who expect that, live in dreams.)

Deportation is a harsh and exasperating form of governmental precaution. A man is living peacefully with his wife and family in some Irish town, earning his living by serving in a shop or by writing for a suspect newspaper. Suddenly the police ring the bell, produce an order from a military authority, and tell him he is to live till further orders in Birmingham or Oxford or some other place where he is a stranger. No harm is done to him; he is not even a prisoner. But meantime he loses his livelihood, his house is left on his hands, he probably finds it difficult to get any paid work in his new place of residence, and his family, whether they follow him or stay behind, are left in a very awkward position.

And yet, what else is an unfortunate Government to do? I was talking a few days ago to a *déporté*, an agreeable and well-read man of much intellectual distinction, for whom I was trying to get some work. He was complaining bitterly that no charge had been made against him; he was an absolutely innocent man. I ventured to ask him: "Suppose a German submarine had come, laden with arms, to the bay where you lived, and asked you to distribute them through the district, what would you have done?"

He hesitated a moment. "The bay is too rocky; they could not bring a submarine there. . . . Well, if they had, I don't know what I'd have done. . . . Yes, I'd have distributed them."

It was candid of him to speak so frankly. But, after all, can you much blame a Government if, in the midst of a long and very terrible war, it refuses to allow people who would help the Germans if they could to live in places where their help would be effective? For my part I cannot.

There is no use in reproaches. Everybody can make them, and everybody has deserved them. There is no use in recalling the wrongs and just resentments of the past. Nothing will help in the Irish Question but absolute mutual forgiveness and absolute concentration on the future.

As an intellectual problem the Irish Question is not very difficult; nothing like as difficult as the Federation of South Africa, for instance. The only difficulty lies in faults of human nature, in self-deception, vindictiveness, rooted suspicion, the devotion of the soul to party hatreds and the fostering of age-long feuds.

The next move must come from Ulster. Ulster has beaten the rest of Ireland. She has beaten England, Scotland, and Wales. She can afford to yield a little. The one strong defence to be made for the inclusion of Sir Edward Carson in the British Government, against which he was lately conspiring, is that a Carson Government can do what no other Government can, in the way of appeasing Ireland. Let the present Government grant, in any reasonable form, some sort of Home Rule to Ireland, and the Ulster Covenanters can surely not

feel injured or humiliated. They can smile a grim smile, and feel that, since they have clearly shown their Catholic fellow countrymen who was master, they do not so much mind admitting that they are all Irishmen.

IX

AMERICA AND THE WAR

(August, 1916)

I

It is dangerous to comment too freely on the psychology of foreign nations. I knew a man who held the opinion that Americans cared for only three things in the world: comfort, money, and safety — objects which notoriously inspire aversion in the normal Briton. And he explained this view at some length to two young Americans, one of whom had been working fourteen hours a day for the relief of distress in Belgium, while the other, with a sad disregard for truth and the feelings of his parents, had passed himself off as a Canadian in order to fight in the British Army.

I know another man, an American man of letters, who went off at his own expense at the time of the German advance in Poland to help the Polish refugees. He worked for months on end among people starving and dying of typhus, often going without food himself and entirely abstaining from some of the most ordinary comforts of life. When I last met him he had seen a thousand people dead around him at one time. He was then on his way back to continue his work, and I felt some nervousness on hearing he was to pass through England. I have an inward feeling that some one at this moment is explaining to him that Americans ask no questions about the war except how much money they can make out of

it, and the one thing you can be sure of about a Yank is that he will be too proud to fight.

This particular man will very likely not retaliate. He will smile sadly and search his conscience, and reflect sympathetically that people who are suffering cannot help being irritable. But some millions of his fellow countrymen will answer for him, and they have rather a pretty wit when they set about answering. A placard over a certain large cinema show in New York once put the point neatly: ENGLISHMEN! YOUR KING AND COUNTRY WANT YOU. WE DON'T.

The beauty of that statement is that it finishes the matter and leaves nothing to argue about. But if you are unwise enough to wish to argue, you will find ample material. Think of all the things, to begin with, that are said against England by Englishmen. Remember all the things that your most Radical friends have said in the past against the Tories and imperialists, and add to it all that the Tories used to say about Lloyd George; double it by all that the U.D.C. on the one hand and Mr. Maxse and the "Morning Post" on the other are saying about every one who does not worship in their own particular tabernacles; sum them all together, and put in front of them the words: "Honest Englishmen themselves confess —"! The effect will be quite surprising. It would be no wonder if the simple-minded American should feel some prejudice against a nation whose leaders are all in the pay of Germany and whose working-classes spend their lives in a constant debauch; a nation which makes up for its inefficiency in the field by riotous levity at home, by ferocious persecution of conscience and free speech, and by the extreme bloodthirstiness of its ultimate intentions towards the enemy.

The wonder is that he feels it so little; that some sane instinct generally helps him to know the grosser kind of lie when he sees it, and some profound consciousness of ultimate brotherhood between the two great English-speaking peoples is so much stronger than all the recurrent incidents of superficial friction.

The main cause of friction is, without doubt, that in the greatest crisis of our history we expected more from America than she was disposed to give. We felt to her a little as the Danes felt towards us in 1864, as the French felt towards us in 1870. When Belgium was invaded, when the Lusitania was sunk, the average Englishman did, without doubt, look expectantly towards America, and America did not respond to our expectations. Were those expectations reasonable and natural, or were they not?

The answer seems to me quite clear. They were entirely natural, but not quite reasonable. We could not help feeling them; but it was not at all likely that the average American voter would feel as we did. How should he? One need not speak of the six million Germans, and the innumerable other aliens in the United States; nor yet of the traditional anti-British feeling in the political "mob." The plain fact is that nations do not go to war for remote philanthropic objects. They get near it sometimes, as we got near it with Turkey in 1895, over the Armenian massacres. But they do not go over the edge, except where the philanthropic indignation is reinforced by other motives or causes of quarrel. And even there, time is needed to awake a whole nation. Mental preparation is needed; the culprit must have a bad character already; the proof of the crime committed must be exceedingly clear. None of

these conditions was present in 1914. The Germans were greatly respected in the United States. There had been a powerful and assiduous court paid to American opinion. Every single crime committed by Germany was accompanied by a cloud of dust and counter-accusation. It was the Russians who insisted on war; it was France which invaded Belgium; it was the Belgian women and children who committed atrocities on the German soldiers; it was the English who used explosive bullets and poisonous gas; I forget whether it was the Lusitania which tried to sink the poor submarine, or if that was only the Arabic; but at every single point at which the national indignation of America might have exploded the issue was confused and befogged. We should remember the immortal words of the Pope, when confronted by the twentieth or thirtieth demonstration of the bestialities done by the Germans in Belgium: "*But, you know, they say they did n't.*" The same answer was always open, not only to Colonel Bryan (why should that eminent pacifist be denied his full claim to military glory?), but to men of much less nebulous judgement than he.

No; it was not reasonable to expect the United States to plunge into war for motives of philanthropy. And if one begins to put the question on other grounds, then clearly it is not for us foreigners to decide what course best suits the interest or dignity of the United States. They know their own case, pro and con, far better than we can, and we certainly need not complain of either the skill or the fervour with which our friends in that great, strange country have stated our case.

But the matter is decided. America will not join in this war. Both political parties are united on that point; and only a few voices of independent thinkers, voices

sometimes of great weight and eloquence, are lifted in protest. I do not, of course, say that there might not arise some new and unexpected issue which would compel her to change her policy; but, so far as the issues are now known, the Americans have made up their minds to have no war.

Such a decision has, of course, had its consequences. Any person who, after hesitating, comes to a decision likes afterwards to have as many grounds as possible for justifying himself, and the same holds of a nation. If America had, for good or evil, plunged into the war, she would have found easily a thousand reasons for being enthusiastic about it and for justifying her intimate sympathy with us. It is now the other way. She cannot help feeling a certain coldness towards people who, as she thinks, tempted her to dangerous courses; who certainly felt, however unreasonably, a shade of disappointment about her. What right had we to be disappointed; to hint by our manner, if not by words, that she had chosen safety rather than the *beau rôle?* After all, why should she fight England's battles? Wicked as the Germans are, — and hardly any normal American defends them, — is England so entirely disinterested and blameless? Is Ireland so much more contented than Alsace-Lorraine? Do the "Black List" and the Paris Resolutions and the "Orders in Council" suggest that the new Liberal England is so very different from the old England that was America's natural enemy? The President has used language which looks like a repudiation of all moral or human interest in Europe's quarrels: "With the causes and objects of the war America is not concerned." I do not believe that the President himself really would hold to that dictum, and I am sure his countrymen would

not. The principle is too cynical for either. But, so far as direct public action is concerned, that statement holds the field. Belgium, Armenia, Poland, Miss Cavell, the horrors of Wittenberg, the wholesale deportations of women, the habitual killing of unarmed civilians; all these are to count as matters of indifference for the executive government of the United States.

But not for the human beings who compose the United States, whether in the Government or out of it. The more they have decided not to intervene publicly in the war, the more they are ready to pour out their sympathy, their work, and their riches to help the distresses of the war. Never was there a nation so generous, so ready in sympathy, so quick to respond to the call of suffering. They exceed England in these qualities almost as much as England exceeds the average of Europe. They will stand aloof from the savage old struggle, free, unpolluted, rejoicing in their own peace and exceeding prosperity, but always ready to send their missionaries and almoners to bind the wounds of more benighted lands. The wars of Europe are not their business.

Unless, indeed, after the war, the victor should come out too powerful? A victorious Germany is fortunately out of the question; but a victorious England — might not that bring trouble? America must after all be "prepared."

II

It is hard for an Englishman to understand how a very great nation, a very proud nation, whom we, accustomed to range the whole circuit of the world and find our brothers trading or governing in the antipodes, look

upon instinctively as our own kinsmen and natural friends, should be content to stay apart from the great movement of the world and to strike no blow either for democracy or absolutism; to leave it to others to decide whether peace or war shall be the main regulator of national life, whether treaties shall be sacred or not, whether or not "government of the people, by the people, for the people" shall perish from the greater part of the earth. And many Americans feel as we do. The most brilliant and magnetic of America's recent Presidents feels as we do. But, as a rule, I believe, the average American is not only content, but proud to stand thus aloof and indifferent. The line of thought leading to such a pride is one familiar to many generations of Americans, the glory of their immense isolation.

Why should they turn back to mix again in the misery and blood-guiltiness of that evil Old World from which their fathers and mothers fled? They will forgive it, now that they are free and safe. They will forgive it, they will revisit it sometimes with a kind of affection, they will pour out their abundant riches to alleviate its sufferings, but they will never again be entangled in its schemes and policies, they will never again give it power over them.

Generation after generation of American settlers have been refugees from European persecution. Refugee Puritans, refugee Quakers, refugee Catholics, French Huguenots, English and German Republicans, in later days persecuted Jews and Poles and Russian revolutionaries, have all found shelter and freedom in America, and most of them some degree of prosperity and public respect. And far more numerous than these definite sufferers from religious or political persecution have been

the swarms of settlers who, for one reason or another, had found life too hard in the Old World. In every generation the effect is repeated. Europe is the place that people fly from; the place of tyrants and aristocracies, of wars and crooked diplomacy; the place where the poor are so miserable that they leave their homes and families and spend their last shillings in order to work at the lowest manual labour in the one land on earth which will really assure them "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." No wonder it is easy for an American to reject all responsibility for the troubles of Europe!

Nay, when you meet an American who is really interested in Europe, you will be surprised to find how little he cares for the things that we consider liberal or progressive. Such things are not what he wants of Europe. He can get them at home. He likes Europe to be European. What he asks of Europe is picturesqueness; old castles, and Louis XIV, and Austrian rules of etiquette, and an unreformed House of Lords. When we reform such things away, he is rather regretful, as we in England might be at the Chinese cutting off their pigtails. In his leisure hours he likes us as we are, and when it comes to business his only determination is that we shall never again interfere with him.

I do not say that such an attitude is wise or right; much less that it is universal in America. But it is a state of mind which is easily intelligible and which must always be reckoned with.

A Liberal Englishman will quite understand it. He may, perhaps, regard it with a good deal of sympathy, and even imagine that it must lead on the whole to a feeling of friendliness towards England as contrasted

with the less liberal Powers. But it is not so. Every large wave of feeling demands a human representative or symbol, and the course of history has decreed that to the average American the symbol of European tyranny is England. He knows, of course, that the Government of Russia or Prussia or Austria or divers other nations may be much worse than that of England; but his own historical quarrel, repeated through many generations, has been with England, and the typical fight for human freedom against tyranny is the American War of Independence; next to that comes the War of 1812. The cause is now won. Freedom is safe, and his relations with England are peaceful, and even friendly. Yet the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. When he hears the words "Orders in Council," "Restriction of Trade," "Right of Search," "Black List," something argumentative and anxious rises within him. When he hears that some person has been condemned as a rebel against the British Government, he tends to murmur, "So was George Washington!"

No; he bears no grudge against his old enemy, but England belongs to Europe, not to America; and she can stay where she belongs. For his part, what does he want with other nations?

He is a citizen of the greatest free nation in the world, and not only the greatest, but, by every sane standard that he believes in, infinitely the best. It has a larger white population than the whole British Empire. Its men and women are more prosperous, cleaner, better paid, better fed, better dressed, better educated, better in physique than any others on the face of the globe. They have simpler and saner ideals, more kindliness and common sense, more enterprise, and more humanity.

Silly people in Europe, blind, like their ancestors, imagine that America somehow lacks culture, and must look abroad for its art and learning; why, as a matter of fact, the greatest sculptor since Michael Angelo was an American, Saint-Gaudens; the two best painters of the last decades, Abbey and Sargent, were both Americans; up to last year the most famous English novelist was an American; the best public architecture is notoriously to be found in America, as well as the best public concerts and libraries, and the most important foundations for scientific research. And to crown our friend's confident picture, there is no country on earth where the children are so happy.

A friend of mine stayed last year in a summer camp of young men and women in a forest in the Middle West, and never once heard the European War mentioned. One night, as they looked over a moonlit lake, a young student spoke thoughtfully of the peacefulness of the scene, and of the contrast it made with the terrible sufferings of mankind elsewhere. My friend agreed, and murmured something about the sufferings of Europe. "Lord, I was n't thinking of Europe," said the young man: "I was thinking of the thunderstorms in Dakota."

If only they could really remain aloof! But they cannot. There is at least one Power with whom they are constantly in contact, and whose world-wide interests are constantly rubbing against theirs both by land and sea; and that Power is Great Britain.

"When two empires find their interests continually rubbing against each other in different parts of the world," said Sir Edward Grey in 1911, "there is no halfway house possible between constant liability to friction

and cordial friendship." That is the gentle and statesmanlike way of putting it. An eloquent American, whose speech this year has been circulated widely across the continent, phrased the matter more strongly. He advocated definitely a British alliance on the ground that between two nations so intimately connected and touching each other at so many points there is no third way: it must be either alliance or war. Yet alliance, after what we have seen, seems impossible; and war cannot even for an instant be thought of. It would be the last disgrace to the modern world, the final downfall of civilization.

Let us try to consider what forces are working in either direction.

III

"Either alliance or war"! It sounds at first hearing a fantastic exaggeration. Yet the words have been spoken by sober-minded people, and it is worth while trying to think them out. It is easy for an Englishman to find in America confirmation of whatever opinions he happens to hold, and terribly easy for him to get the proportional importance of such opinions completely wrong. Indignation with Germany and horror at her cruelties; emotion about the Irish rebellion and its suppression; irritation at the Black List; angry alarm at the Paris Resolutions; a general desire for kindness to everybody, and especially for a quick and generous peace — all these waves of sentiment, and many others, are to be found in America, and possess their own importance and influence. But it seems to me that there are two currents of feeling that have swept the whole continent, and are

likely, whatever party is in power, to shape the effective policy of the United States.

The first reaction produced by the war and the determination not to participate in it has been the movement for "Preparedness." It is first a preparedness for war. England, according to popular opinion, had been unprepared, and France not much better. America, had she tried to enter the war, would have been more utterly unprepared than either. Suppose the German attack had fallen on her?

The direction of this first movement has gradually changed with the course of events. The campaign of "Preparedness" presupposes some possible or probable aggressor, and it has gradually become clear that that aggressor will not, for many years to come, be Germany. The prospect of a really victorious Germany would shake America to her foundations and probably change completely the national policy; but there is now no such prospect. The danger, if there is any, will come from a victorious Great Britain, allied, as America always remembers, with a victorious and unexhausted Japan. Other neutral nations in this war may be waiting to side with the conqueror; but America is built on too large a scale for that. She will arm against the conqueror, and be prodigal of help to the vanquished.

The "Preparedness" campaign is still in its early stages and has not assumed its definite form. But it started as a spontaneous non-party movement; it was taken up by the Republican Opposition; it was eagerly supported by President Wilson and his Government; it has been clearly thought out and firmly developed by Mr. Hughes. Army, navy, and mercantile marine are all to be increased and developed; but it is noteworthy

that more stress is laid on the navy than on the army, and politicians have already uttered the ominous phrase, "A fleet that shall not be at the mercy of the British fleet"! More important still must be the preparation for a great mercantile rivalry. Vast sums have already been appropriated for shipbuilding, and other steps, too, are to be taken to secure for America her proper position in shipping and in foreign trade. No more dependence upon English bottoms! Competition will be very severe. At the end of the war, Mr. Hughes warned the audience in his Notification Speech, "the energies of each of the new belligerent nations, highly trained, will be turned to production. These are days of terrible discipline for the nations at war. . . . Each is developing a national solidarity, a knowledge of method, a realization of capacity hitherto unapproached." Mr. Hughes is too wise and broad-minded to put his thought in a threatening shape. But most of his hearers throughout that vast hall thought of the Resolutions of Paris, and felt that if the Allies chose to pursue war methods in their commercial action, America must be ready to respond.

One's heart sinks at the prospect opened out by this policy. Trade rivalry; severe protection; the State deliberately entering into the commercial contest with subsidies and penalties; competitive shipbuilding; the desire for a strong navy behind the merchant fleet; and at the end of a vista that prize which has dazzled so many nations, some of them perhaps not much less peace-loving and level-headed than the United States, the position of recognized centrality and supremacy among the great nations of the world.

Is there no prospect of escape?

Yes, there is. The above is the first great current of

feeling that, in my judgement, has swept the whole people of the United States; the second is the antidote to it, and is almost, if not quite, equally strong. It is the determination that, if America can help it, a colossal iniquity like the present war shall not be allowed to occur again. The feeling needs no explanation. It is that of every Englishman of moderately liberal feelings, and is deeply ingrained in the nature of the ordinary American. It has swept through all political parties and most other sections of the community, except a few extreme pacifists and those pro-Germans who are working for an inconclusive peace and a second war.

It was first formulated by Mr. Taft, as president of the League to Enforce Peace. Mr. Taft's series of arbitration treaties, following on those initiated by John Hay, made him the natural champion of this further effort to organize the prevention of future wars. The general idea is quite simple and well known: a League of Powers, bound to settle their differences by conference or arbitration, and equally bound to make joint war on any Power which, in a dispute with one of them, refuses arbitration and insists on war.

The plan was immediately welcomed by public opinion in the States. It spread everywhere. President Wilson committed himself to it last May in an emphatic speech, which was perhaps a little too tenderly tactful towards the Germans to be whole-heartedly acceptable in England. But in point of fact most of the leaders of English thought had already expressed approval of the principle. It is no less significant that the federated Chamber of Commerce of the United States, a powerful and extremely cautious body, has voted by large majorities in favour of the policy of the League, and by overwhelming

majorities for all the proposals but one. (Just over a third of the delegates shrank from committing themselves to actual war for the sake of peace, though they were ready to agree to an absolute boycott of the peace-breaker.) And, finally, Mr. Hughes, in his Notification Address, has thrown the whole strength of the Republican Party into the scheme. His words are well thought out: "We are deeply interested in what I may term the organization of peace. We cherish no illusions. We know that the recurrence of war is not to be prevented by pious wishes. If the conflict of national interests is not to be brought to the final test of force, there must be a development of international organization in order to provide international justice and to safeguard as far as practicable the peace of the world." In addition to the International Tribunal and the sanction of armed force behind it, "there are also legislative needs. We need conferences of the nations to formulate international rules, to establish principles, to modify and extend international law so as to adapt it to new conditions and remove causes of international difference."

This is obviously no fantastic scheme. It is accepted by the leaders of both parties, and by the enormous preponderance of American opinion, both progressive and conservative, both educated and uneducated. It is only rejected by the open enemies of England and by some of the extreme pacifists.

It is hard at present for the leaders of a belligerent nation to come prominently forward in favour of such a scheme as this. For one thing they cannot act without their allies; for another, they must not lay themselves open to the charge that they are spending their time and thought on any object but the winning of the war. Still,

there is little doubt about the general attitude of the leaders of public opinion in England towards a scheme of this kind. Mr. Asquith, Mr. Balfour, and Viscount Grey, among others, have spoken pretty clearly.

"Long before this war," said the last-named, on May 15, 1916, "I hoped for a league of nations that would be united, quick, and instant to prevent, and, if need be, to punish the violation of international treaties, of public right, of national independence, and would say to nations that came forward with grievances and claims: 'Put them before an impartial tribunal. If you can win at this bar, you will get what you want. If you cannot, you shall not have what you want. And if instead you attempt to start a war, we shall adjudge you the common enemy of humanity and treat you accordingly.' Unless mankind learns from this war to avoid war, the struggle will have been in vain."

Almost all opinion in England agrees; so, as far as my information goes, does opinion in France. But in America the course of events has brought the movement more sharply to the front and faced it with a far more emphatic alternative. If we and our allies respond to this movement, there is good hope for the world; the enemy may respond or not, as he prefers. If we reject it, there is before us, not merely the possibility of some unknown future war, such as there was before the present shaping of the nations: there is a peril clearer and more precise. There are definite seeds of international rivalry already sown and growing; there are on both sides of the Atlantic the deliberate beginnings of a movement which, however justifiable at present, needs but a little development to become dangerous; there is the certain prospect of those thousand disputes which are

bound to arise between two great commercial nations competing hard for the same markets.

American preparedness will soon be an accomplished fact; American readiness for a League to Enforce Peace after the war is probably a fact already. We must not, of course, be precipitate; we must not forget that our actual allies have obviously the first claim on us. We must not make any claim as of right on the sympathy of the United States, or ask her for a jot more than she is prepared to offer. But in the end it will rest largely, though not entirely, with us in Great Britain to decide whether that preparedness shall be merely an instrument for the promotion of American interests against those of her rivals, or a great force to work in conjunction with us and our friends for organizing the peace of the world. On those lines alliance will be possible after all.

X

AMERICA AND ENGLAND[1]

(November, 1916)

YOUR EXCELLENCY, LORD BRYCE, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: —

I confess that from my boyhood up, long before I had any knowledge to support the instinctive feeling, I have felt an ardent and even romantic interest in America. After all, America is the great representative of democracy, and the man who has no faith in democracy really confesses that he has no faith in the human race. And still more America in a peculiar way represents the hopes of the future. She embodies the greatest experiment known to history at escaping from the trammels of the past, while using the experience of the past, and starting humanity afresh with a clean slate. Such an experiment could not, of course, be confined to the members of a single nation. It must throw open its arms to a large part of the world. And we in Great Britain may well be satisfied with the share that we have taken and still possess in this building-up of the nation of the clean slate.

You will hardly expect me to speak about the Presidential election. We all think about it; but it is ground on which Mr. Roosevelt himself would recognize that an Englishman, if he walks at all, must walk "pussy-footedly." The one fact that stands out most promi-

[1] Address to the Mayflower Club, November 14, 1916.

nently to an observer at a distance is the high personal quality of both the candidates. The record of American Presidents as a whole is a great testimonial to democracy; and it is certainly true in the present instance that, in force of character, in integrity, and in intellectual power, both candidates are men of the highest rank, who would do honour to any Cabinet in the world. On the matter with which in England we are most concerned, — the war in Europe, — we may also claim that both candidates have — what shall I say? I will not say any predilection in favour of the Allies, for I believe them to be just and impartial; but they both have the thing which to us matters most, some real understanding of the aims and causes, the nature and origin, of the conflict.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you take a long view of history I think you will find that we stand now at a dramatic and momentous point. You in America are to history a nation of refugees, a nation built up by men and women who fled over a thousand leagues of inhospitable sea to escape from the oppressions and entanglements of Europe, and especially, in your early days, from those of Great Britain. English Cavaliers, Puritans, Quakers, Catholics, Scotch Presbyterians, have all helped to build you up. In later generations, when there was no more need for people to fly for refuge from Great Britain, came the refugees of central and eastern Europe, and fragments of all the peoples that are still ground down by domestic poverty or the misgovernment of the Turk. It is, perhaps, a paradox to speak of your great and powerful continent at the present time as a nation of refugees. But I think the memory of your origin still affects your policy and certainly still haunts your imag-

ination. Most nations have some sort of legendary conception of themselves, some *fable convenue* in which they instinctively believe, even when it has ceased to correspond with the facts. I believe great masses of people in America unconsciously think of themselves as refugees like their ancestors, and of Great Britain as a country of lords and flunkeys, pickpockets and John-Bull-like farmers in swallowtail coats, still governed by George III and Lord North or the "Sea Tyrants of 1813." When we wish to speak to you as brothers, you remember that we are the elder brothers who cast you out.

And now a cause has arisen, a need, a momentous issue, in which we as a nation, both those who cast your fathers out and those who comforted your fathers and remained in England fighting for the same causes as they, are constrained to appeal to you as brothers. Not necessarily for military help! Do not imagine that. So far as we can see, we have full confidence in ourselves and our allies. But we appeal to you, first of all, to understand us. It is intolerable to us, intolerable for all the future hope of humanity, that this our testimony of blood, this our martyrdom for a cause which we hold sacred, should be regarded by you, our friends and brothers across the Atlantic, as a mere quarrel of angry dogs over a bone. We have made our appeal and a large part of America has responded magnificently, with that swiftness of brain, that ready sympathy and generosity, which are so characteristically American. I know no better statements on the diplomatic causes of the war, at any rate among neutral nations, than some of those that were published quite early in the Eastern States. But other parts of your nation had gone too far off to

hear us. They had built up their own life too independently to care about our troubles. I believe also that the very magnitude of the cause at issue makes it difficult for us to explain and for them to understand. How shall we try to state that cause, to put into words, however imperfect, the centre of our profound feeling? It is a difficult task.

"Government of the people, by the people, for the people"? That is a principle which Americans have paid for with their blood and which they understand with every fibre of their being. But is it exactly democracy for which we are fighting? The Republic of France, the limited monarchy of England, and the autocracy of Russia? We sometimes say, and feel, that we are fighting for democracy, and in a sense it is true; but democracy alone cannot be the exact definition of our cause.

Is it, then, a fight for civilization against barbarism? The thesis is difficult to maintain. In material civilization, at least, Germany is actually our superior. The organization of German trade, of railways, of schools, even of things intellectual, seems, at least to a superficial glance, to be the acme of civilization. To speak of the Germans as barbarians may in some profounder sense have truth in it, but in the ordinary meaning of the words it is a paradox.

Some people again have tried to tell the Americans that we were fighting for Christianity against Godlessness, but that is not, as it stands, a very persuasive statement. They can point to many saintly lives in Germany; the bookshelves of their professors of divinity are loaded with German books of devotion and theology; and I hardly imagine that we and our French allies make quite the impression of a nation of early Christians.

None of these statements seems exactly adequate, yet there is some profound truth underlying all of them. I do not suppose that my own definition will stand criticism much better than these I have mentioned, but I will venture to put to you the way in which the issue strikes me. You remember the old philosophical doctrine of the "Social Contract" as the origin of ordered society; that men lived in a "state of nature," with no laws, no duties to one another, no relationships — *homo homini lupus*, "every man a wolf to every other man"; and then, finding that condition intolerable, they met together and made a "contract," and hence arose civilized society. And you will remember the criticism passed on the doctrine by such philosophers as T. H. Green: the criticism that beings in that supposed condition could not even begin to make a contract; that before any contract can be made, there must be some elementary sense of relationship, of mutual duty, some elementary instinct of public right. Before any contract is possible, there must be at least the elementary understanding that if a man pledges his word, he should keep it. It is that primary understanding, that elementary sense of brotherhood or of public right, which it seems to us the present Government of Germany in its dealing with foreign nations has sought to stamp out of existence. It has rejected, in the words of the King's Speech, "the old ordinance which has held civilized Europe together." It has acted on a new ordinance that every nation shall be a wolf to its neighbour.

Do you find that indictment hard to believe of such a nation as Germany? I think we can see how it came about. Germany is the great country of specialization. Above all she has produced the specialized soldier; not

the human soldier, the Christian soldier, the chivalrous soldier, or the soldier with the sense of civic duties; but the soldier who is trained to be a soldier and nothing else, to disregard all the rest of human relations, to see all his country's neighbours merely as enemies to be duped and conquered, to treat all life according to some system of perverted biology as a mere struggle of force and fraud. They have created this type of soldier, able, concentrated, conscienceless, and remorseless, and then — what no other people in the world has done — they have given the nation over to his guidance. Of course we all have armies. We all have experts and strategists. But with the rest of us the soldier is the last resort, like the executioner. We call him up only when all other means have failed. But in Germany the soldier is always present. He is behind the diplomatist, behind the educator, behind the preacher; he is behind the philosopher in his study and the man of science in his laboratory; always present and always in authority. In other nations the sword is the servant of the public welfare, a savage servant never used but in the last necessity; in Germany all the resources of the nation are the servants of the sword.

How far can America be brought to see this or in general to understand our cause? Roughly speaking, I think it would be true to say that the most instructed part of America — New York, Boston, and the Eastern States — understood early. They understood rapidly and acutely and they responded generously. The rest of America is gradually learning to understand. I met, in my recent visit to the United States, two men, both exceptionally good witnesses and of different sides in home

politics, who had journeyed right across the continent about a year ago and again recently; and they both made the same report: that the knowledge and the feeling of the comparatively small part of America which understands and studies European affairs were spreading steadily from East to West. They had reached much farther this year than a year ago.

The position of our cause in America is not unsatisfactory. Both the Presidential candidates, as I have said, understand it. In speaking of them, whether they differ from us or not, no one would have to explain things from the beginning. Again, in the recent election, though naturally neither party actually turned away votes that offered themselves, there was no party which would dare openly to admit that it was pro-German, only a small, disorganized faction on both sides. I think we may also say that such points of difference as we have had with the United States during the war — and such points of difference are absolutely bound to arise — have been treated by the Government and the majority of the people of the United States, I will not say with any special indulgence towards us, but at least in a spirit of great fairness and neighbourly good-will. Of course America will not fight. What nation in history ever did fight from motives of pure philanthropy and sympathy in a war four thousand miles away? Of course America will not fight — unless, that is, the war should take some new and unexpected turn directly menacing her interests. But in many ways America can help or hinder us in the war; and especially it is America more than any other nation which will register the opinion of the neutral world. We believe that we and our allies can show that militarism is a failure:

we want America to pronounce judgement that it is wicked.

Instructed America is already overwhelmingly with us. The great interest of the present situation is that by the issue of the Presidential election it is uninstructed America that is now largely in power. (When I say "instructed" and "uninstructed," I mean, of course, "instructed" and "uninstructed" as regards European affairs.) President Wilson has, of course, abundant knowledge and imagination; it is easy enough to state our case to him. But the great masses behind him, the masses of the South and West, are drawn precisely from the most non-European part of America, the part that neither knows about us nor wishes to know. It is to those great masses of the South and West that we have somehow to make ourselves understood. Many of you now present know them better than I do, but even I have known a good many. They will honestly try, I believe, to understand us. They will bring to the task, perhaps, some anti-British prejudices; certainly abundant ignorance — as abundant and profound as our own ignorance of the affairs of Minnesota and Wyoming. They will bring some lack of experience, some lack of tradition in that delicate tact combined with firmness, that self-restraint, that respect for foreign nations, that power of seeing another's point of view, which is essential to a sound foreign policy. But they will bring also quickness of mind, indomitable vigour, real American generosity, and a most abundant store of good-will. I do not think there is any nation on the earth which contains so large a proportion as America of people who really and actively wish to do right — and to feel good afterwards. It is to these people that we must appeal,

not for help in war, nor for any immediate alliance, but for two purposes. We must appeal to them, first, merely to listen and think and understand; and secondly, when they have realized what we are fighting for during the war, to work for common ends with us after the peace. I will not wait now to define these ends; they have been stated by Mr. Asquith and Lord Grey. I do not know exactly what form it may prove best for America's co-operation to take. For my own part, I follow Lord Bryce and Lord Grey, Mr. Taft, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Hughes, as a devout believer in a league to enforce peace. America has made that proposal, and Lord Grey speaking for the Allies has announced that we are in favour of it. The exact form and machinery of the league must, of course, remain to be settled hereafter. But I do not think it will be exactly that league spoken of by Dr. Bethmann-Hollweg, of which Germany "is quite willing to put herself at the head"; nor do I imagine that its first object will be "to guarantee Germany from another invasion by Belgium."

The truth is — and this will be one of our difficulties — that between us and America, as between every belligerent and every neutral, there is one great gulf to bridge. Most neutrals — and especially these Westerners of whom I spoke — move inside a certain normal range of ideas. They understand the goodness of being sober, honest, thrifty, kind, — extraordinarily kind, — and even religious. They praise and admire — and even practise — the virtues which lie within the normal range of experience, that range within which to lose one's life is the greatest of misfortunes and to take another's life the greatest of crimes. But we in Great Britain have got beyond those barriers. We have become familiar with

the knowledge that there are things in life which are greater than life. We have learnt, more than we ever learnt before, that the true work of mankind upon earth is to live for these greater things. I am not exaggerating or using high-falutin language. Go out into the street and talk with the first bus-driver or cabman who has lost his son in the war; he may be inarticulate, but if once he begins to speak freely, you will find him telling you that he does not grudge his son's life.

We stand outside the barriers that I have spoken of, and our words and gestures must seem strange to those within, but it is to them that we must explain ourselves. A picture rises to my mind as I am now speaking to you, a picture of New England as I motored through it a few months ago: the pretty, prosperous country towns; the workmen's settlements, especially in the evening when the men come back from work and the children from school; the refreshment rooms at the big railway stations, full of fruit and coolness, with no smell of alcohol in the air and no tang of alcohol in the conversation between the customers and the waitresses; the whole atmosphere clean, healthy, and lighthearted, an atmosphere of fairly hard work and abundant prosperity. How can any foreigner—how dare any foreigner—ask that they should change that for the life which we are now leading?

I remember just before starting on that drive hearing by telegram that two of my intimate friends were killed, and on the ship I heard of two more. At Liverpool I remember the curious shabbiness of the streets and houses, as if all repainting and decorating were being put off until after the war. At Carlisle the mass of tense, overworked munition workers; the papers full, as they

are now, of some two-thousand-odd daily casualties. I remember the impression then made upon me by the slow steps and somewhat haggard faces of ordinary men and women in the British streets. No; we cannot ask the Americans to stand in our shoes; but I would like them to know, and fully realize, that, by Heaven, we would not stand in theirs, nor in any others than our own! When I realize most fully the burden we are bearing, the ordeal of fire through which we are resolved to pass, I am not only proud of my country, I thank God that, if this awful evil was to fall upon humanity, — this awful evil to avert another yet more awful, — that our country was called upon to stand in the very van of battle and of suffering, and that we have not flinched from our task. We are the sailors in the ship of humanity, the sailors and the engineers. We may yet be swept off the deck; we may be crushed or stifled in the engine-room; but at least we are not mere passengers and we are not spectators.

To Western Americans, perhaps to all neutrals, the horrors of war so utterly outweigh all the other elements that it seems to be nothing but horror. That is, perhaps, the sane view, and our own feeling may have a touch of the insane about it, but I am sure that it has also a touch of the profounder truth. A friend and pupil of mine wrote to me the other day about the Somme battles, and how they had made him feel the difference between soul and body; how the body of man seemed a weak and poor thing, which he had seen torn to rags all about him and trodden into mud, and the soul of man something magnificent and indomitable, greater than he had ever conceived. When we talk like that, you neutrals sometimes shudder at us and feel as if we were possessed by an evil

spirit. No. The spirit may be dangerous, but it is not evil. Go about England to-day and you will find in every town men and women whose hearts are broken, but who are uplifted by a new spiritual strength. They know that there are issues greater than life, and that for these issues, if it is well to die, it is also well to suffer. And there is one mistake, a mere mistake in psychology, which I would urge you not to commit. Do not confuse war with hatred. The people who feel this spiritual exaltation are exactly those whose hearts have not room for hatred. The soldiers fighting do not hate as a rule; and the people who feel greatly do not hate. It is mostly those who are somehow baffled and unable to help, or are brooding over personal wrongs, that give way to hatred. I remember reading in a New England farmhouse a curious document, the will of an old Southerner made in 1866, in which, since he had lost everything in the Civil War, he bequeathed to his children and grandchildren: "The bitter hatred and everlasting malignity of my heart against all Yankees, meaning by that term all who live north of Mason and Dixon's line." What a strange ghost of the past that now seems! How the moss has grown over those old stones that once were burning lava! And even he was not a soldier of the war, but an old man and a non-combatant; otherwise he would not have been so bitter. I would like our neutral and pacific friends to realize, first, that, as Lord Bryce has said, in our normal days we are as peaceful a nation as themselves; and secondly, that now, when war has become our duty, the more we feel the cause for which we are fighting and are uplifted in spirit by the need of determination and of sacrifice, the less room there is in our minds for the mean feelings of spite or hate or revenge.

It rests with men themselves to turn this appalling experience into spiritual good or evil. There are influences enough, God knows, pulling in the evil direction; they are published every morning and evening. But the Government, the more thoughtful men and the central mind of the nation, are, I believe, keeping tenaciously to the higher and more permanent ideals. If that is done, we may win from this war, as from some great Aristotelian tragedy, a "purification wrought by pity and by fear."

XI

THE SEA POLICY OF GREAT BRITAIN

(October, 1916)

An article in the "Atlantic Monthly" for October by Mr. Arthur Bullard has set me thinking. It was hard to classify. It was not exactly pro-German. Most of its general sentiments were unexceptionable. It did not seem to be written in bad faith. Yet it was full of sneers and accusations against Great Britain which almost any candid reader, who knew the facts, must see to be unfair. I did not know what to make of Mr. Bullard till at last there came across my mind an old description of a certain type, the second-best type, of legendary Scotch minister: "In doctrine not vera ootstanding, but a deevil on the moralities!"

Mr. Bullard's general doctrine is fair enough. There have been two types of foreign policy in Great Britain, one typified, if you like, by Lord North or Castlereagh or Disraeli, a type which concentrated on its country's interests and accepted the ordinary diplomatic traditions of Old-World Europe; the other typified by Fox, Gladstone, Campbell-Bannerman, Bryce, which set before itself an ideal of righteousness and even of unselfishness in international politics. Both parties made their mistakes; but on the whole the Liberal movement in British foreign policy is generally felt to point in the right direction, and its record forms certainly a glorious page in the general history of civilization. Mr. Bullard,

speaking as an enlightened American, is prepared to befriend, or at least to praise, Great Britain if she walks in Liberal paths, but intends to denounce her if she follows after Lord North. For example: he denounces the policy of the Boer War, but he praises warmly the settlement which followed it in 1906 under the guidance of Campbell-Bannerman, Asquith, and Sir Edward Grey. "The granting of self-government to the defeated Boers will always rank as one of the finest achievements in political history." This is all sound Liberalism, and I accept every word of it.

There is nothing peculiar, then, about Mr. Bullard's doctrine; it is only when he applies it that one discovers his true "deevilishness on the moralities." His method is to ask at once more than human nature can be expected to give, and then pour out a whole commination service of anathemas when his demands are not complied with. He begins, as it were, by saying that all he expects of Mr. X—— in order to love him is common honesty and truthfulness: we all agree and are edified. Then it appears that Mr. X—— once said he was out when he was really at home and busy. The scoundrel! A convicted liar, a man who has used the God-given privilege of speech for the darkening of knowledge! How can Mr. Bullard possibly be friends with such a man?

To take one small but significant point first. Mr. Bullard, like most people, sees the need of continuity in foreign policy, and the great objections to a system in which a new Government, or even a new influence at Court, may upset a nation's course. But he does not see that such continuity implies some sort of compromise. A continuous foreign policy in a country gov-

erned alternately by Foxites and Northites is possible only if both parties abate their extreme pretensions. And Mr. Bullard, if I read him aright, expects it to be continuous Fox. As a matter of fact, we have had lately a continuous foreign policy in Great Britain, because Grey, while moving always as best he could towards arbitration, equity, and a "cordial understanding" with all Powers who would agree to it, was felt also to be keenly alive to his duties as the steward of a great inheritance.

But let me begin, as an Englishman, by seeing what Mr. Bullard thinks of us. We have apparently started by "a wholesale repudiation of legal restraints." We have "decided that there is to be no sea law." Consequently we have "alienated neutral sympathy more gradually, but more surely, than the Germans." And this alienation, we are led to suppose, is not mainly because of any selfish annoyance on the part of neutrals whose interests are crossed; it is just their high-minded disapproval of wickedness. They are all just as "deevilish on the moralities" as Mr. Bullard is. Naturally, however, they dislike our "brusque denial that nations with smaller navies have any voice in defining the law." "The Sea-Lords have decided what they would like to do, and His Majesty's Privy Council has announced that that *is* the law." In English opinion and action "Might makes Right" — this phrase is constantly repeated. We are always "hitting below the belt." And lastly and most explicitly, "The scrap of paper on which Great Britain had promised fair play at sea is torn up!"

I leave out certain passing accusations of hypocrisy and proceed to examine the grounds for this invective.

"The scrap of paper on which Great Britain had promised fair play at sea is torn up." By the "scrap of

paper" Mr. Bullard means the Declaration of London; and he knows perfectly well that the Declaration of London was never passed into law, never accepted either by Great Britain or by any other nation. It is simply untrue to say that we promised to observe the Declaration, or that that document has in any way been violated, since it never was law. Mr. Bullard himself gives most of the facts; so it is apparently just for fun, or in the joy of rhetoric, that he writes such nonsense as this.

The Declaration of London was an attempt to codify and improve the traditional rules of warfare at sea, which have always been very fluctuating and uncertain. It was due largely to Sir Edward Grey. He summoned the chief maritime nations to a conference on the subject in December, 1908; the conference sat for less than three months, and in February, 1909, made a report which was embodied in the Declaration of London. It was greatly discussed and eventually rejected in the British Parliament. It was not, I believe, even proposed anywhere else. As a matter of fact, the Declaration did not fully satisfy any one. It was certainly a move in the right direction, but there were two large objections to it. First, many international lawyers — Professor Holland was one of them — considered that it had been drawn too hastily and was not a satisfactory legal code. Secondly, its desirability or undesirability depended partly on certain large political problems which were obscure in 1909. They are anything but obscure now.

To take one point only, the one that specially affected Great Britain. We were then in the midst of our long negotiations with Germany for a reduction of armaments and a cessation of naval rivalry. The Liberal policy was, in general, to conciliate Germany by every

possible concession that could be made without fatally weakening ourselves or betraying the rest of Europe. For example, we deliberately kept our army very small, to prove that we intended no aggression. On the other hand, we could not give up our naval superiority because we are an island power; and, if we were once defeated at sea and blockaded, we could all be starved to death or submission in a few weeks. The Germans, on the other hand, objected to our naval superiority on a number of vague or inadmissible grounds (e.g., that "the German eagle was lame of one wing so long as her fleet was not as powerful among other fleets as her army among other armies"), and on one that had some shadow of reason. They objected to having their very large mercantile marine at the mercy of Great Britain in case of war. Consequently it was worth our while, if we could thereby avoid war and secure good relations with Germany, both to abandon the right of prize and, in general, to cut down the rights of a power commanding the seas in such matters as blockade and contraband. (When I say "rights," I mean practices claimed as rights by ourselves and others when in command of the sea during war, though often disputed or denied by other Powers, or by the same Powers in a different situation.)

That is, we, as the Power commanding the seas, were arranging to give up certain traditional advantages for the sake of getting a better code of sea law universally recognized, and in particular for the sake of insuring the good-will of Germany. What happened? In the first place, the proposed code turned out to be unsatisfactory and was not adopted by any single nation. In the second place, instead of responding to our overtures of good-will, Germany sprang suddenly at the throat of Belgium and

France and drove us into war. And Mr. Bullard coolly assumes that we ought to put in practice against ourselves, in war, the code which no nation had adopted and which had been meant as a concession to avoid war! And not only that. I can conceive a sort of visionary, like Edward Carpenter, arguing that such an angelic example would have softened the heart of all nations and made them hasten — I will not say to help us, but at least to write us some most flattering obituary notices. But Mr. Bullard takes quite another line. He thinks we are thieves and scoundrels and tearers-up of treaties, because we did not so penalize ourselves!

What we did was to announce at the beginning of the war, as a guide to other nations, that, though we did not, of course, accept it as a code, we should in general and with some deductions follow the lines of the Declaration. This seems to Mr. Bullard worse than nothing: it seems to me about the best thing that could be done in the circumstances.

But here Mr. Bullard has a very cunning point to make. It has been made also by Professor Liszt. He knows and admits that the Declaration was never ratified and had no legal force. But he points out that, both in inviting the other nations to the conference and in recommending the Declaration when it had been framed, authoritative persons explained that the purpose of the whole proceeding was "not to legislate, but to codify." "We obtained recognition of the fact," says Lord Desart, "that, as a body, these rules do amount practically to a statement of what is the essence of the law of nations."

Consequently, argues Mr. Bullard, to repudiate the Declaration, even if it was never ratified, is to repudiate the essence of the law of nations.

A clever piece of trick argument. What is the answer to it? (1) A very simple point. Mr. Bullard, following Professor Liszt, does not give the whole of Lord Desart's sentence, but stops in the middle of a phrase, where there is not even a comma! The whole phrase is, "amount practically to a statement of what is the essence of the law of nations properly applicable to the questions at issue under present-day conditions of international commerce and warfare." That is, (*a*) it is admitted that the existing rules do not cover the questions at issue under present-day conditions; and therefore (*b*) the conference has done its best to apply the essence of the law of nations to the solution of these new questions. Lord Desart thought the attempt was successful, and that the conference really had produced what was "practically" a statement of the essence of the old law as applied to the new problems. This view was not accepted by the British Parliament, nor apparently by any other, since they did not ratify the Declaration.

(2) Codification without alteration is really an impossible achievement. Every person of experience knows that you cannot codify a large mass of floating customs and divergent laws without, by that very fact, introducing changes. I doubt if there has ever been any large work of codification accomplished, which was not both recommended to its admirers as being a great reform, and defended against its opponents on the ground that it was a mere registration of existing practice. Every great codification creates new law.

(3) The Declaration is specially recommended by its authors as being a compromise. The claims and customs of different nations conflict; each one yields here and is recompensed there. The best statement perhaps of the

work of the conference is contained in the General Report of its Drafting Committee: —

"The solutions have been extracted from the various views or practices which prevail, and represent what may be called the *media sententia*. They are not always in absolute agreement with the views peculiar to each country, but they shock the essential ideas of none. They must not be examined separately, but as a whole, otherwise there is a risk of the most serious misunderstandings. In fact, if one or more isolated rules are examined, either from the belligerent or the neutral point of view, the reader may find that the interests with which he is especially concerned are jeopardized by the adoption of these rules. But they have another side. The work is one of compromise and mutual concessions. Is it as a whole a good one?"

Thus, the Declaration is not a mere declaration of the existing law of nations. It is a compromise in which different parties make concessions, in response to other concessions which are made to them. And Mr. Bullard expects Great Britain, when suddenly involved in war with the most terrible enemy known to history, to make gratuitously all the concessions contained in the proposed compromise, and leave it to chance, or to the mercy of the Germans, whether she should get any of the compensations! And concessions, too, which her Parliament had considered excessive in peace time, even with the compensations guaranteed!

What, then, is left if the Declaration of London is not accepted? Is there to be no law of the sea at all? What is left is exactly all that there was before the sittings of that conference, plus a certain extra lucidity in places due to its reports. The British courts simply continue

to administer international law on the basis of precedent adapted to new conditions, exactly as all Powers in the world have done. This offends Mr. Bullard, but I find it difficult to make out what other course he would recommend.

To establish an international court *ad hoc*, in the middle of the war, and ask it to settle the new questions as they arise? To submit all cases to the neutral Powers, with all the small European neutrals terrified of offending their big military neighbours? Refer all questions to the United States alone? Call another conference to revise the Declaration of London, and keep all prizes waiting till it reported? I doubt if any of these courses would please many people. There may be some course which would have been better than the normal one, but it certainly is not obvious to the ordinary eye. And it seems a little hard to denounce the British Government as lawless tyrants, justly hated by the world, because they do not pursue a better method of settling prize cases than any one has yet practised, or perhaps even devised.

So much for general principles; let us now consider whether in detailed practice the claims of the British Government or the practice of the British courts has been particularly reprehensible. The two questions are, of course, distinct; and my own impression, given merely for what it may be worth, is that the decisions of the courts will bear the severest scrutiny, while the claims of the Government are closely analogous to the claims advanced by all Governments in a similar situation. They will compare not unfavorably, for instance, with the claims of the United States in the Civil War. It

should also be noticed that Great Britain does not act alone; and as compared with the precedents laid down by various nations in previous wars, a policy agreed upon by six of the most important maritime Powers in the world has at least a slightly higher claim to validity than one laid down by a single Power. Mr. Bullard, in one extremely high-principled passage, explains that the United States could not in conscience join the Allies in this war because that would be fighting in order "to make British convenience the rule of the seas." But here his moral feelings have evidently intoxicated him. It is obvious that, if the United States had cared to come in, — which I am not for a moment urging, — the law of the seas would, at the very worst, have been interpreted, not for the convenience of Great Britain alone, but for the convenience of Great Britain, France, Italy, Russia, Portugal, Japan, and the United States.

But let us consider the particular enormities which England is supposed to have committed. And let us be clear about the issue. I do not contend that we have never stretched in our favour the vague body of unwritten rules, based on conflicting precedents and unenforced by normal sanctions, which is called international law. Every belligerent in every war hitherto has done so; and that not always from national selfishness alone. International law, apart from the fundamental misfortune of having at present no sanction behind it, suffers from two great weaknesses. It is not for the most part framed on clear principles, and certainly has not been built up in times of peace by "calm thought and discussion"; it has mostly been built up by precedents and protests and compromises based on immediate pressure. In the second place, the body of precedents is very scanty com-

pared with the importance of the interests involved. It is not like the English common law, so rich in recorded precedents that almost any conceivable new complication between litigant interests can be solved by analogy with some past judgement. Every new war gives birth to new problems and complications which are not covered by any precedents in previous wars, and have to be settled by very imperfect analogies or by the violent stretching of some previous rule. But the present war differs from all its predecessors to a quite unusual degree, both because of its own vast scale and the new methods of warfare it has introduced, and because the whole structure of the world has been transformed since the last great body of available precedents. What would be the condition of private commercial law at the present day if it had nothing to go upon but one or two precedents in 1870, a few more from the time of the American Civil War, and a good number between 1790 and 1815?

Our first great offence is our extension of the doctrine of "continuous voyage." This doctrine was first applied on a large scale by the Government of the United States during the Civil War; it was an extension of previous belligerent rights, was discussed by Great Britain and other Powers, and finally accepted as legitimate. The point is a simple one. By the old rule a belligerent has a right to prevent certain ships and cargoes from going to the enemy; he has no right to prevent their going to a neutral port. But suppose he finds them going to a neutral port from which the cargoes are to be taken straight on by a protected road to the enemy? What is the rule to be? The United States argued that the goods were really on a "continuous voyage" or a process of

"continuous transportation" to the enemy, and could therefore be treated just as if they were going direct to the enemy port. This argument was generally accepted by publicists, notably by Bluntschli. It was accepted by the International Commission which sat in pursuance to the treaty made at Washington on May 8, 1871; and it was acted upon in the South African War, when stores shipped to Delagoa Bay and clearly intended for Pretoria were treated as contraband.

In the present war the extension became inevitably far wider. Germany's own ports are closed; she proceeds to import whatever she needs by way of Copenhagen or the Dutch ports. We assert the doctrine of "continuous voyage" and treat all contraband goods shipped for Copenhagen, but obviously intended for German use, just as if they were shipped for Hamburg. Let me first illustrate this point, and then deal with a difficulty that arises.

The cases of four ships, the Kim, Alfred Nobel, Björnstjerne Björnson, and Friedland, were considered between July and September, 1915, when judgement was given on all four together. The cargoes had been seized and there were numerous claims against the British Government for compensation. Some of these were allowed by the High Court on various grounds, but most were rejected. The main facts were as follows: Certain exporters, mostly American, sent to Copenhagen enormous quantities of lard and "fat backs," which were in great demand in Germany. They contain glycerine, which is the basis of various explosives. There is no beast so charged with potential explosive as a fat hog. More lard was thus sent to Copenhagen in three weeks than had entered the whole of Denmark in the previous

eight years. There are differences of detail in the various transactions, but one company, for instance, consigned its goods to an anonymous agent in Copenhagen, who had no address beyond a hotel where he happened to be staying and who proved to be their permanent representative in Hamburg. The company a little later received a telegram from this Hamburg agent saying, "Don't ship lard Copenhagen, export prohibited" (that is, export to Germany was prohibited by the Danish Government). In other cases there were misleading descriptions of goods and deceptive consignments. There was not the remotest possibility of question that the "fat backs" and lard were in the main meant for German explosives. Our High Court gave the benefit of the doubt to those claimants whose case seemed really doubtful.

So far can any one blame us? Can any reasonable person argue that Germany ought, by international law, to be free to import all the explosives she likes, under the nose of the Allied fleets, by simply making them land at Copenhagen instead of at Hamburg?

But now difficulties begin. I will not spend time on the curious argument that "continuous voyage," though it applies to absolute contraband, should not apply to conditional contraband. A compromise on these lines had been proposed in the Declaration of London, but is obviously illogical. Neither will I discuss the point, dear to technical lawyers, that the doctrine of "continuous voyage," though sound for contraband, perhaps does not apply to blockade, on the ground that the cargo may continue its journey by land and a blockade by land is not a blockade, but a siege. Such an objection, if correct, can hardly be said to "apply the essence of international law to present-day questions."

The real difficulties of the situation lay in sifting the goods intended for Germany from the *bona-fide* imports of Denmark and the other border countries. Denmark, Holland, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, all had their normal needs. They used butter and dynamite and rubber and copper and lard and "fat backs" themselves, and we had no right, and certainly no wish, to interfere with them. What were we to do? Were we to examine every ship and sift the whole of her cargo? That would involve immense labour, infinite waste of time, and the certainty of many mistakes. We discussed with the various parties concerned all kinds of arrangements by which our legitimate suppression of supplies to the enemy might be carried out with the minimum of inconvenience to neutrals. The exact arrangements vary in different countries and none can be entirely without friction, though, of course, our natural object is to reduce friction to a minimum. I only wish I could make Mr. Bullard realize the enormous amount of work and ingenuity which our officials devote to the task of preventing incidental injustices and appeasing injured susceptibilities.

The main methods are twofold: (1) We invite those merchants and corporations in neutral countries who are importing goods *bona fide* for their own country's consumption, and not for reëxport to our enemies, to sign an agreement to that effect. In most countries there is a large union or trust which has collectively made such an undertaking, and which endeavours to prevent breaches of the agreement by its members. (2) We try to ascertain the *bona-fide* imports of each country by taking the average imports of some ten previous years, and allowing some extra amount —

varying in different cases — to replace such imports from enemy countries as may have disappeared. If these averages are greatly exceeded, — and they sometimes have multiplied themselves by ten or twelve, — we become suspicious, make further searches, and generally find some enterprising smugglers who have broken their undertaking to us and are consequently added to a black list. They are people who prefer to supply the enemy; and we do not willingly, in war time, allow people to supply the enemy, any more than the enemy, when he can help it, allows them to supply us.

These two methods applied in conjunction are the best instruments that we have discovered for carrying out without undue friction our necessary, although somewhat oppressive, task. The war does impose on neutrals a considerable amount of hardship; there is no use denying it. And the enormous opportunities for money-making which it also affords to a good number of traders in each country are only a poor excuse for the general inconvenience. Still, I doubt if much improvement is reasonably possible upon these measures which "Great Britain in concert with all her Allies" has taken to prevent trading with the enemy through our lines, so long as neutral States meet us in a neutral and conciliatory spirit. When they do not, of course there is trouble. The absolute refusal of the Swedish Government to sanction any agreement for the purpose of determining what imports were going to the enemy and what not, has led to much friction and mutual reprisals. And similarly in Greece, the perpetual series of frauds and secret hostilities which have followed the King's unconstitutional dismissal of Venizelos, his trick upon us at Salonica, and his breach of treaty with our ally

Serbia, have produced a policy of pressure on the part of the Allies, which can be justified only as preferable to actual war. For there is no doubt that from the original breach of treaty onward the Greek Government has provided us with abundant *casus belli*. But these painful controversies are not the result of our trade policy: they are incidents of natural friction with Germanizing courts or governments. But Mr. Bullard is for some strange reason speechless with horror over the first of our instruments. It seems to him a "humiliating surrender of sovereignty" that the Dutch Government should sanction the existence of the Overseas Trust, which undertakes, so far as overseas imports are concerned, to trade only with one side in the war. I cannot see where "sovereignty" comes in. It is a purely business arrangement, by which certain firms who want for themselves goods passing through the hands of one belligerent, undertake, if they receive the goods, not to hand them on to the other.

I pass to a real difficulty, where I do not feel at all sure that our policy was wise, though on the whole the balance of well-informed opinion seems to approve of it. I mean the so-called total "blockade" of Germany, including the shutting-out of foodstuffs. The history of this policy is as follows: —

On February 4, 1915, the Germans announced that all the seas round Great Britain were a "war area" in which they would sink without warning all ships whatsoever. (Neutrals might be spared on occasion, but could not complain if they were sunk.) This was a proposed blockade by submarine, which has hitherto proved to be impracticable. If Germany had commanded the seas

she would, of course, have proclaimed a real blockade and prevented any ship from reaching Great Britain.

Now, we made no objection to the enemy's wishing to blockade us. We objected to the submarine blockade on its own special demerits, because it could not be, or at any rate was not, carried out with any respect for humanity. A regular blockade may be compared with putting a line of policemen across a street to turn back intruders. The submarine blockade was as though a man, having no police at his disposal, were to make occasional dashes into the street with a revolver and shoot passers-by. But this point need not be laboured, since American opinion was quite in agreement with ours. The point to consider is the retort that we made.

Up to February we had allowed, not only foodstuffs, but important articles for munition-making, like cotton, to proceed freely to Germany. On February 4 Germany announced that no ship would be allowed to sail to or from Great Britain, and that all our shipping, including even fishing-boats, would be sunk at sea by submarines. We replied on March 11 that, if they chose to put the war on that footing, we took up the challenge. After a certain date we would allow no ship to carry goods to or from Germany, and, as for their murderous submarines, our fishermen should have arms and fight them. The submarine war has been at times extremely dangerous to us, and may be so again; but, so far as we can at present judge, we have won it. By unheard-of efforts of daring and invention our seafaring men have baffled and destroyed the submarines, and we have turned the tables of the blockade completely against the enemy.

Our action, however, has been criticized on several grounds. (1) On grounds of international law. Here I

must stand aside and leave the lawyers to speak. It is no part of my case to argue that in all the innumerable controversies produced by the war England has always been technically in the right. But it seems pretty clear that in this matter a condition has arisen which has no precedent in previous wars and is not covered by any of the existing rules. If our action is to be described as a "blockade," there has certainly never been any blockade like it before, either in vastness of scale or, I think, in efficiency, or in the leniency with which it is exercised. Neither has any Government of a belligerent nation before commandeered all foodstuffs for its own use, as Germany has, and thus brought them under the category of contraband. Nor again, so far as I know, has there been a parallel to the curious position in the Baltic, where our command of the sea suddenly ceases, not from any lack of strength or vigilance on our part, but because the neutral Powers who own the narrow entrances to the Baltic have closed them to our warships. We seem here again to be creating a precedent, but not, I think, a precedent that is repugnant to the "essence of international law properly applicable to questions at issue under present-day conditions." Mr. Asquith seems to have accepted some such view when he explained that our policy was to exclude supplies from Germany, and at the same time refused to use the term "blockade" in order "not to be entangled in legal subtleties." The gravest objection to the whole policy is, no doubt, the hardship which it inflicts on neutrals. All blockading, all stopping of contraband, all interference with shipping, inflicts hardship on neutrals; and the immense scale of the Allied operations in this world-war makes the total hardship inflicted very large.

I sometimes doubt whether the Allies would have taken this drastic step had they not felt that, on the main issue of the war, neutral feeling was so overwhelmingly on our side that it would probably accept a good deal of inconvenience in order to have the war finished more rapidly and successfully. And I do think that the general attitude of most neutral nations, and most especially of America, has shown a high standard of generosity and of what I may call "world-patriotism."

(2) Secondly, on grounds of humanity. We are said to be "starving the women and children of Germany." The answer is, first, that such a blockade is a normal measure of war in all sieges and was practised, for example, by the Germans in the siege of Paris. It has always been understood that the siege process would be applied to Great Britain by any enemy who should command the sea. It was attempted by Napoleon, and it has been applied already by Germany, though with complete lack of success. We are doing to Germany what they are trying to do to us. Secondly, while we are a nation vitally dependent on sea-borne imports for our food, Germany is almost completely self-supporting. She can live for an indefinite time on her own produce; and the most that our "blockade" can do is to make life less comfortable and the supplying of the army vastly more difficult. No human being in Germany need starve because of our "blockade."

There is a further development of this argument which causes many people, myself included, grave searchings of heart. It is connected with the treatment of conquered territories, such as Poland, Serbia, and, to a lesser degree, Belgium. By every canon of law and humanity, as well as by the express stipulations of the Hague Convention,

a nation which holds conquered territory assumes serious responsibilities towards the inhabitants. All these the German Government has repudiated. It appears certain that the German Government has not only destroyed during its military operations practically all the food-supplies of Serbia, and much of the food-supplies of Poland: it has further, during its occupation of those territories, carried off into Germany, with or without pretext, almost all the food that remained in them. It has produced famine of a ghastly description, and excused itself by attributing all to the British blockade.

This is bad enough, but worse remains. Appeals were made to us to do for Poland and Serbia what we did for Belgium: to admit food for the starving natives and, of course, also contribute to the food-fund ourselves. This we were willing and anxious to do if we had the same guarantee as in Belgium, that the Germans would not take the food, native or imported, for their own use. They were not to take the imported food themselves; nor were they to sweep the country bare of all the native-grown crops and cattle, and leave us to support entirely the whole population of their conquered provinces. To the surprise of most people concerned, they refused to give this guarantee. By starving these territories, it appeared, they gained two advantages. First, they forced large numbers of Poles, and perhaps a few Serbs, to seek work in Germany and set free so many Germans for the fighting line. Secondly, they could use the famine to stir up hatred against the British. Mr. Bullard assures us that even in America the starvation of Poland is generally attributed to our blockade, and if writers of his tone have much influence I have no doubt that what he says is true. As for the unfortunate Poles

themselves in their misery and isolation, who can tell what they believe?

This is a hideous state of things, and if our blockade is at all an effective element in causing it, I would be in favour of dropping the blockade forthwith. But it does not seem to be so. If Germany did not wish to starve these people she need not do it. We are willing, both to admit food and to send food, so long as she will promise not to steal it. If it be argued that Germany cannot be expected to look on at a crowd of conquered Poles and Serbs enjoying themselves while good sound Germans are short of pork and butter and bread, the answer is that, even at the best, we should hardly be able to bring the food-supply of two utterly ravaged and devitalized countries, like Poland and Serbia, to a level approaching that of Germany. Germany is living on her own resources and those of her allies, true; but the territories in question are both vast and fertile, and scarcely the extreme fringe of them has been touched by the war. On the whole, it does not look as if Poland or Serbia would appreciably benefit by our admission of food to Germany.

The extension of the doctrine of "continuous voyage," and the prevention of all sea-borne trade to or from Germany: those are the two main problems. The remainder are smaller things, although in many ways interestiog and important. In all of them, I think, the central fact is that we have extended some existing doctrine of international law to meet the special situations produced by this war. I do not say that in all cases we have decided rightly. Sir Edward Grey has definitely offered to submit to a convention after the war the whole question of

what is called "The Freedom of the Seas," and such a convention will probably settle some of these points in our favour and some against us. At present there is no convention either existing or possible. There is no fixed code of the sea and never has been. We have to use our own tribunals, which administer international law to the best of their ability according to precedent. They have on certain occasions decided that our Government has done wrong and can be compelled to pay damages; they have decided that certain Orders in Council were against international law and have disallowed them. They have, I may note in passing, declined to admit the plea of the Crown that it was following an American precedent which was afterwards embodied in an act of the United States Congress, on the ground that the said precedent and act were too oppressive. The United States claimed that the Government could requisition any goods or ships which had been captured by their fleet, without previous trial.[1] When the convention comes to sit on these questions which we have tried to settle, they will probably, as I said before, decide some for and some against us; but I am confident that they will not find that our courts have acted with either levity or rapacity.

I mention summarily the chief remaining points. *We treat "bunker coal of enemy origin" as contraband;* and Mr. Bullard considers this as absolutely the very worst thing we have done. He quotes ancient precedents to show that "things needful for the working of the ship or comfort of the crew" are not to be treated as contraband. But the rulings in question all date from before the time of steam and refer to sailing ships. Coal is admittedly in

[1] Judicial Committee of Privy Council, in the Zamora case, April 7, 1916.

a special position, and international law has not yet pronounced upon it.

Thus far, then, our "very worst" offence is not so serious. But perhaps it is our motive that is so infamous? Our motive is simple. As explained above, we do not allow traders to carry through our lines goods intended for the enemy, and we ask all traders for an assurance that they are not doing so. If they refuse to give this assurance, and if further we find them buying enemy coal, we treat them as if they had been buying any other enemy goods. What does the enemy do to ships from England or Russia in the Baltic? And do we ever think of complaining?

We examine neutral mails. This seems a bad case. We have actually a rule of the Hague Convention against us, just as all the belligerents have — or have only just missed having — in the matter of aeroplanes. The Convention maintains the inviolability of all mail-bags, and used to forbid all dropping of explosives from the air. Yet I feel some confidence that any future conference will recognize that both those rules are "unemployable," and will justify our action about the mails. The old precedents do not apply at all. There has never been in any previous war anything approaching the present network of commercial and political correspondence across the Atlantic. Suppose in the Civil War there had been large settlements of Confederates in Mexico and in Canada, who were engaged in plots against the United States? Is it to be believed that President Lincoln would have refrained from opening the captured mail-bags passing between Canada and Mexico? A German in Denmark or Sweden arranges for an Indian in San Francisco to come to England with a false American

passport in order to murder Sir Edward Grey: is he to have the right of sending and receiving letters, unhindered under the eyes of the British fleet? Plots about contraband are, of course, much commoner. Are we to be allowed to search ships for nickel and rubber, but forbidden to interfere with these plotters' mail-bags? The rules and the precedents of other wars are here against us, but I must say that such a complete change in conditions seems absolutely to demand a change of rules.

"*The closing the Suez Canal to neutrals is a measure for which no military necessity has been shown.*" Mr. Bullard does not seem to question its legality, and I have not tried to find out exactly what the rights of either Egypt or Great Britain or the Suez Canal shareholders may be. But as for the military necessity, surely a child can see it. To block the Canal would be worth some millions of dollars to the enemy. A much smaller sum would suffice to induce a dozen Greek, or Swedish, or even unprejudiced Dutch, skippers to play certain tricks which I need not name, but which might make the Canal unusable for several weeks.

Mr. Bullard ends with a number of vaguely prejudicial statements, largely in the form of innuendo or parenthesis. He seems really unable to understand the conditions produced by war. He says we regard it as "moral for neutrals to help England but a deadly sin to trade with Germany." Of course it has nothing to do with sin. We do not fire at German men-of-war because we think them immoral, but because they are our enemies. We do not confiscate cargoes of rubber consigned to Germany because it is essentially immoral for Germans to use rubber. We only say to every neutral trader, "If you trade with Germany, we will not trade with you."

Or rather that is the extreme limit of what we say. The opposite conduct was once considered possible, but seems to us of the present generation a little dishonourable. It makes us a little ashamed when we learn that Napoleon's armies were often clad in cloth from Yorkshire and boots made in Northampton. The view of the British Government at that time was that it was good business to make money by supplying the enemy and use the proceeds for defeating him. It is a possible view, and apparently is the view that appeals to Mr. Bullard. And doubtless it would enable both ourselves and certain neutrals to make more money. But — well, we do not like it, and do not believe that in the end it pays.

And then the article tails off into vague horrors about the British censorship and the Defence of the Realm Act and the deplorable profits made by British shippers, and the "party of Lord North which is installed at the Foreign Office"!

Everybody knows that in war censorship is necessary; every nation employs it, Great Britain rather more leniently than the rest. It is a pure myth to suppose that in England we are kept in the dark about important sides of the war which are well known to neutrals. I have been in four different neutral countries since the war began, and have read their newspapers; so I speak with confidence. But it is just the sort of myth that Mr. Bullard accepts without question. As to the Defence of the Realm Act: of course the act gives the Executive tremendous powers and would, if continued in normal times, be incompatible with civil liberty. But everybody knows that some such special laws are necessary in war time; there is no nation in Europe which attempts to do with-

out such laws, and Mr. Bullard makes no attempt to show that any other nation applies them more leniently than England does. As to the fortunes made by shippers, why drag in the word "British"? With the German merchant ships out of use, with Allied and neutral ships sunk to the number of some hundreds by submarines and extensively commandeered by the various Governments for war purposes, there is an extreme shortage of ships together with an immense demand. Every tub that will float, of whatever nationality, is bringing its owner fortune. And we dare not discourage them, for we want every ship we can get. Mr. Bullard, dropping for a moment his lofty idealism, complains simply that the British are getting too large a share of the swag, an unproved and to me extremely doubtful statement. Naturally ships belonging to the Allied Powers are less open to suspicion than neutrals are, and consequently are less harassed by certain restrictions. But the British, at any rate, are not only subjected to enormous war-taxation, but have in addition fifty per cent of their war-profits confiscated. And Lord North at the Foreign Office! Really one smiles at Mr. Bullard's innocence. "The visitor thought we were naughty, papa; but of course he has never seen us when we are really naughty!" In every country engaged in war there is somewhere below the surface a growling mass of passion, brutality, lawlessness, hatred of foreign nations, contempt for reason and humanity. In Great Britain, thank Heaven, the brute is kept cowed and well chained, though at times his voice is heard in the more violent newspapers. The brute knows the hands that hold him down and hates almost all the present Cabinet, but most of all, perhaps, he hates two men: the great and

moderate Liberal who presides over the Government, the great and moderate Liberal who guides the Foreign Office. — And Mr. Bullard, in his innocence, would like to turn them out!

It is all rather pitiable. Nothing verified, nothing exact, nothing impartially stated, not much that is even approximately true. Mr. Bullard seems to mean well; I have no doubt that he means well. But his present tone will not serve the ends of Liberalism. It will only serve to foster prejudice, to make bad blood, to stir up that evil old spirit of slander between nations, which every decent Liberal and certainly every good internationalist would like to see buried forever.

It is false to say that Great Britain has broken the Declaration of London, because that Declaration was never accepted as law. It is false to say that Great Britain is alone responsible for every unpopular act committed at sea by the Allied navies; she is acting in concert with nearly all the great maritime Powers of the world. It is idle to complain that Great Britain administers international law by means of her own courts; that is the only method ever followed by other belligerent nations, the United States included, nor has any better practical method, so far as I know, been even proposed to her. And lastly, I believe it is profoundly false to say that the British courts have acted in heat and passion or at all fallen below the level of scrupulous care which is expected from the best judicial bodies in the world.

It is not likely that their decisions are in every case exactly right. It is to be hoped that after the war, if we can get some fair security of future peace and establish some permanent and effective international tribunal, we may reach a definite code of international law which all

nations can agree to uphold. Whatever meaning there is in the catch phrase "Freedom of the Seas" will then come up for serious discussion, and Sir Edward Grey has officially announced our willingness to take part in such discussion. In the mean time the great group of Powers which is, as Mr. Bullard admits, on the whole fighting for the maintenance of public right and for honesty between nations, cannot be expected, in the midst of its mortal struggle, to divest itself of its normal sources of strength, to satisfy an ideal which has never been demanded of other belligerents.

There is another tale, by the way, about that minister who was such "a deevil on the moralities." He once found a respectable citizen being attacked by two thieves. He first thought of helping the citizen, but eventually put his stick between the man's legs and tripped him up. "The man was never a good churchgoer," he explained, "and his language at the time was a most sinful example." The analogy to Mr. Bullard is closer than I thought. But I am certain that he does not speak for his countrymen.

XII

OXFORD AND THE WAR[1]

A Memoir of Arthur George Heath, Fellow of New College, and Lieutenant in the Sixth Battalion, Royal West Kent Regiment

(September, 1916)

There are perhaps no institutions in England whose response to the requirements of the war has been more swift, or whose sacrifice more intense and enduring, than the two ancient universities. Not, indeed, that it is very profitable to measure the comparative sacrifices of those who give their all. If these two mothers gave without hesitation, so, of course, did many others. But these two had, in the nature of things, a gift to offer which strikes the onlooker as richer than most, more brilliant, more pathetic, more inevitably suggesting the idea, by all worldly standards, of incalculable and heroic waste.

Men of many kinds and many different natures have gone out of Oxford, to return thither only as a memory and an inscribed stone. But perhaps the two classes that have most touched the imagination are those who stand, from the academic point of view, at the extremities of the scale.

On one side the more or less idle and wealthy men to whom the university had been something nearer to an athletic or social club than a place of study, and whose lives had often seemed to be little more than an expres-

sion of irresponsible youth, if not a mere selfish pursuit of pleasure.

It was a surprise to many of us to see how, when the need came, there was found in these men an unsuspected strenuousness and gravity. The power, it would seem, had always been there; but to call it forth needed a stronger stimulus than the ordinary motives of well-to-do English life. And many an Oxford teacher must have begun to revise his general estimate of human nature when he heard the later history of various undergraduates over whom he had hitherto shrugged despairing shoulders; what hardships they faced without a murmur, what care they took of their men's health and comfort, how they had shown themselves capable, not only of dying gallantly, but of shouldering grave and incessant responsibilities without a lapse.

And at the other end of the scale were men almost the opposite in character: students selected from all the schools of the kingdom for their intellectual powers, men whose ideals of life were gentle, to whom Oxford was above all things a place of study and meditation, where they could live again through the great thoughts of past generations and draw from them light for the understanding of truth or help for the bettering of human life in the future.

These men, unlike the first, were accustomed normally to live for their duty, and their duty hitherto had lain along quiet and rather austere paths. It had led them towards industry and idealism and the things of the intellect; also, no doubt, towards the ordinary habits of manliness and good temper which make life in a community pleasant. Those of them especially who had joined the tutorial staff of some college had it as a large

part of their daily business to think for others, to practise constant sympathy and understanding, to be the friend of every pupil who came to them, and to have no enemies.

And on these men there fell suddenly a new duty; the same as the old, perhaps, in its ultimate justification, but certainly in its concrete expression the most violent opposite of all they had hitherto thought right. They were called abruptly to a life in which their old attainments and virtues, as it seemed, were not wanted, their standard of manners somewhat out of place, their gentleness and modesty almost a positive disqualification; while activities were suddenly demanded of them which they had never practised and which, for all any one knew, might be entirely foreign to their natures. And here, too, there came to the onlooker a somewhat awed surprise, to see how the same inward power which had shaped these men's previous lives was ready for its new task. They adapted themselves. They found how to use their brains in a field that was strange to them. They learnt to command instead of persuading or suggesting, but still turned their experience in handling pupils and classes to advantage for the leading and shaping of their platoons. They proved themselves able to endure fatigues and dangers outside all the range of their previous imagination, and even, what must to many have been a more profoundly hateful task, to study carefully how to inflict the maximum of injury upon the men in the trenches opposite. They would never in normal life have been soldiers, yet they brought some great gifts to their soldiering. After all, there are very few fields of life where a keen intelligence is not apt to be useful, or where habits of duty and sympathy and understanding are not very valuable things.

It was to this class that Arthur Heath most typically belonged; and in trying to write of him one feels how much easier it would be to describe a man of the other type. The other type makes such an obvious picture; the young man who "cuts" his lectures and is misunderstood by his dons, who neglects his mere books because his heart is in romance or adventure or thoughts of war; the man of dominant will and stormy passions, or of reckless daring and happy-go-lucky lawlessness, who is always in trouble till he rises to the call of need and becomes a hero. The Idle Apprentice always forms a better picture than the Industrious Apprentice, and his life is more interesting to read.

To make a man's story clear one needs achievements, and to describe him vividly one seems to need some characteristic weaknesses. But the men of whom I write were very young, and had lived so far a life with little external achievement, only the achievements of high thinking and feeling, of quiet tasks well done and generous duties well carried through: a life with plenty in it to command admiration and love, but nothing to make a story about. And as for characteristic weaknesses, I suppose these men had them, being human; but I should find it hard to name Arthur Heath's weaknesses, and they were certainly not picturesque enough to be remembered. One remembers these men by slight things; by a smile, a look of the eyes, a way of sitting or walking; by a sudden feeling about some chance incident — "I should like to talk that over with Heath," or, "How Heath would have laughed at that!" But such things can hardly be communicated, any more than the sense of loss or loneliness can. One can only say: these young men were beautiful spirits and of high promise; they

lived a sheltered though strenuous life, partly devoted to high intellectual studies and ideal interests, partly to that borderland of social work in which hard thinking and brotherly love go hand in hand; then, when the call came, they stepped instantly out into a world of noise and mire, worked and laughed and suffered with their fellow men, and, like them, died for their country.

A slight story in any case, and in Arthur Heath's perhaps slighter than in most. The mere annals of his life have comparatively little interest. As is said by one who knew him especially well, they are summed up in the phrase, "Like boy, like man." It is a singularly uniform story of quiet industry and strength, a very gentle, affectionate, and modest nature, extraordinary powers of intellect and a rather individual but irrepressible sense of humour.

He was born in London on October 8, 1887, and was educated at the Grocers' Company's School, of which he always spoke very highly, and which certainly seems to have had the power of turning out thoughtful men. He rose through the various forms with surprising rapidity, excelling at almost everything he touched. He was very good at such sports as running, swimming, and shooting; he delighted in natural scenery and country walks, and he showed an especial gift for music. In December, 1904, he obtained an Open Classical Scholarship at New College, Oxford, and came into residence in October of the next year. It so happened that I had just returned to Oxford and New College myself that term, after an absence of sixteen years, and was told, I remember, that I should have two particularly good pupils to teach — the senior Winchester Scholar, Leslie Hunter, and the Open Scholar, Heath, from some London school. They

both abundantly justified the description. They ran each other close for the great university distinctions, remained friends and colleagues, and died not very far apart on the Western front.

I remember finding Heath waiting in my study, a slender, delicately made freshman, very young-looking, dark, with regular features and great luminous eyes; rather silent and entirely gentle and unassuming. A freshman from a London school is apt to be a little "out of it" at first; he is surrounded by boys from Winchester, Eton, Rugby, and the other great public schools, who have old schoolfellows by the score scattered about the university, and whose ordinary habits and manners, virtues and weaknesses, form the average standard of the place. Heath's gentleness immediately inclined most people to like him, while his brains obviously commanded respect; but he was always reserved and did not quickly become well known in college. He struck one in his first terms as living an intense inner life of watching and thinking, observing and weighing, and making up his mind quietly on a multitude of subjects, while quite refusing to be bullied or hurried. He had not had as much training in Greek and Latin composition as the best boys from the great schools, a fact which just prevented him from getting the two blue-ribbons of scholarship, the Hertford and Ireland. But he came second for both, and obtained a Craven Scholarship in 1906 and a First Class in Moderations in 1907 and in Greats in 1909, after which he was immediately elected a Fellow of New College.

Before settling down to his teaching work he travelled for a year in France and Germany, attending the Universities of Paris and Berlin, and visiting Leipzig, Munich, Heidelberg, and other places. His chief in-

terests at this time, apart from music, were philosophy and social reform. He had expected much from the French Socialists and the German philosophers, and his letters to me seem to show that both expectations were disappointed. His accounts of the struggles of advanced French politicians are more amusing than respectful, and he could not find the relief and edification that Jean Christophe found in the religious enthusiasm of the votaries of violence. On the other hand, he conceived both respect and warm affection for individual Frenchmen; he was keenly interested in the theatres, and greatly admired the work of certain French philosophers. In Germany his experience was similar to that of so many English students. He was disappointed in the teaching of the universities, though he rather admired the actual lecturing. He was quite surprised at what seemed to him the decadence of German philosophy. He thought that its highly professional and technical character led its professors to multiply systems and interest themselves in system-building rather than to look freshly at the facts they had to study; and that quite often some criticism of indurated error which had come to be a commonplace in Oxford was unsuspected or hailed as a new discovery in the German schools. He was amused, too, and somewhat bored at the self-conscious insistence on German *Kultur*, with which his ears were inundated; the word was still unfamiliar to most Englishmen at that time. And he wrote me a serious and perturbed warning, as to a fellow friend of peace, about the anger against England and the inclination towards war which he found widespread in Germany. Neither he nor I, he considered, had at all realized the strength of these feelings. On the other hand, he was favourably

impressed by the strength and discipline of the German Socialists, especially in the south, and the general reasonableness of their political action. He had always loved German music, and he revelled in the mediæval towns and the vestiges of the simple life of old Germany.

When he returned to Oxford, he took up his regular work as a Greats tutor, lecturing mostly on modern philosophy, especially on various branches of political speculation. He took, on the one hand, such subjects as "Sensation, Imagery, and Thought" and "The Psychological Account of Knowledge"; and, on the other, "Laissez Faire," "Modern Socialism," "Socialist Criticisms and Socialist Remedies." During these four years he was building up a great position of quiet influence as a tutor. Good pupils are apt to repay richly whatever effort a tutor spends upon them, but I have seldom heard such warm language of friendship and admiration as from certain of Heath's pupils when they talked about him.

It is curious to notice that, at this time, when his work was so strikingly successful and his ship had been happily brought to port, he began, for the first time in my knowledge of him, to be uneasy and discontented. It is a phenomenon often visible in the best of the young tutors at Oxford, and is connected with the very quality which makes them inspiring as teachers. It is not that they do not enjoy their work and their pupils. They do both. But their interests overflow the bounds of their activities. They pine for a field of work with more life in it, a wider outlook and more prospect of effectiveness, a horizon less limited by examinations and routine and the constant training of undeveloped minds. Still more, perhaps, it is the moral trouble that besets all purely

intellectual workers, the difficulty of maintaining faith in the value of your own work. Even if Heath had been able to know what his pupils and colleagues thought of him and said of him among themselves, he would probably have suspected that they were merely exaggerating. But of course, as a rule, men do not hear these things. Friends cannot openly pay one another compliments.

To Heath, so far as he discussed the matter with me, no definite alternative really presented itself. His life was very varied in its interests. Besides his personal studies and the work with his pupils, he derived intense pleasure from his piano, and took an active part in the musical life at Oxford. He would often go out to one of the Oxfordshire villages and play classical music to the village people. He was also, during his last two years of residence, one of the university members on the Board of Guardians, where his care and good judgement were greatly valued, and the contact with practical life and concrete economic problems opened to him a new vista of interest. He refused to stand for a certain provincial professorship, which would have given him a larger income and more leisure, coupled with less congenial work and less advanced pupils. At one time he hankered after the profession of medicine, the one form of intellectual work whose utility is as plain as a pikestaff. Sometimes, again, he rebelled at the idea of always teaching men who had such abundance of good teaching already, and wished to devote himself entirely to the "W.E.A."

This society, whose initials stand for "Workers' Educational Association," has exercised a great fascination over the best minds of Oxford for the last ten years or so. Wherever a class of working-men chose to gather

together and ask for a trained university graduate to teach them and to read and discuss their essays, the organization tried to provide an Oxford or Cambridge man, and as a matter of fact usually managed to send one of the best and most invigorating of the younger teachers in the place. Most of the classes were conducted in the town where the working-men happened to live, but arrangements were also made by which picked men came to Oxford. The success of the movement, from an educational point of view, has been nothing less than extraordinary; and, considering the miserable pay and the discomforts of the teacher's life, the devotion with which dozens of brilliant young men have thrown themselves into the tutorial work has been a credit to human nature.

One of Heath's W.E.A. pupils, a member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, wrote to a friend: "It was Mr. Heath's influence in our talks together (more especially in Oxford) on philosophy that had a most profound effect, I hope for good, on my character, but at any rate on my course of life, opinions, and actions. Nothing I know of has had so much effect, and on the whole brought so much real happiness. . . . I almost loved that man, so you will forgive the tone of this letter if it appears strange."

Early in 1914 his friends were surprised to see the announcement that Heath had been awarded the Green Moral Philosophy Prize for a treatise on "Personality"; the book will, I hope, be published at the end of the war. He had not told most of his friends that he was writing at all; and I remember that some of us amused ourselves by writing him pretended letters of congratulation from various celebrities who were popularly sup-

posed to be guilty of "personality" in their political speeches, and who offered or requested suggestions for its more effective use. He detected us, of course, and wrote to me shortly afterwards: "It is my painful duty to inform you that the police have tracked to your house three letters which have recently been delivered to me containing illicit threats and improper comments on a question of public interest. Willingly as I acquit you of any personal share in the matter . . . it is not right that Innocence and Respectability — as found in my pupils and my scout — should be exposed to even a remote chance of such contamination" — as these letters apparently contained. He threatened prosecution, but would be content if the criminals left the university.

I used during these years to see a great deal of him, and had the custom of lunching on Tuesdays, after a twelve-o'clock lecture, with him and his colleague G. L. Cheesman, a young historian. Cheesman knew all about the army of the Roman Empire, and the history of various separate legions, and had travelled in Dalmatia and the Balkans. He was a man of generous and brilliant mind, an inspiring and vivid personality. Cheesman loved argument, and Heath and I loved Cheesman. And we differed enough in opinion to keep up a constant guerrilla warfare on all kinds of political and intellectual topics. In politics, Cheesman affected the part of a wide-awake, progressive Tory, while Heath and I were content to be dull, old-fashioned Radicals. On other subjects, of course, the divisions were different.

I think it was on August 7, 1914, three days after the declaration of war, when I had just returned from London, that I had a call on the telephone from Heath, proposing himself to dinner, and telling me that he and

Cheesman had both applied for commissions. The summons had come, and both men, so different in tastes and opinions, though alike in idealism, had responded to it together. They had taken about two days to think the matter thoroughly out. Heath came up to our house that evening, and one or two other men also. And we talked over the war, and Grey's speech, and the resistance of Liège; and the imminence of danger to France; and the relative strength of the British and German fleets; and then of our German friends and the times we had stayed in various parts of Germany. Later on Heath sat down to the piano and played French music, Hungarian music, and, lastly, German music, and the company sang German songs as a kind of farewell, and he and his friends walked back to college.

He went first to train at Churn, near Oxford. Then he obtained a commission in the Sixth Battalion of the Royal West Kent Regiment, his home at this time being in Bromley, and joined his regiment at a swampy camp in the southeastern counties, whose amusing discomforts and oddities he described in many letters. "No self-respecting cow," I remember, "would graze in such a place." I refrain from mentioning the various camps where he was stationed, and the special forms of training he went through. It is enough that he became at last wearily impatient to go out to France. There were frequent rumours of a move: at one time hopes were roused by the prospect of a special inspection by a distinguished and corpulent veteran "who is being moved to-morrow night by mechanical transport from E. . . . for that purpose." He opined that "Italy and Kitchener's Army will remain neutral till the end of the war." One comfort was that "Our Adjutant, in whom I have

every confidence, informs us that within three months we shall all be knocked out." This letter ends with a postscript: "In the last stages of our twenty-seven-mile march I heard one man ask another if there was a parade the next morning. 'Yes,' was the answer; 'half-past-four. Top-hats and bathing drawers.'"

At last, on May 31, 1915, I received the following note: "All military movements must be executed with profound secrecy, and known to no one except the population of Aldershot, the station-masters on the southern lines, the British mercantile marine, and the friends and relatives of the few thousand men concerned. Therefore, all I can say to you at this crisis is, *Vive la France! Vive l'Armée de Kitchener! Conspuez Northcliffe!*"

This cheery tone ran through almost all his letters, and was borne out by the vigorous gait and sun-browned skin which one saw on his occasional visits to Oxford. Military training improved his physical health and cheerfulness. He complained that his intellect had become dormant, but it was not so. He read a good deal and thought vigorously. He had at first, like all thoughtful Englishmen, a feeling of utter horror at the prospect of European war, and an uneasy suspicion that, however necessary it might be, now at the last moment, for England to fight, surely our policy for many years back must have been somewhere dreadfully at fault. The White Paper was the first thing to reassure him; then came the study of earlier questions; and in the end he felt confidence in the wisdom and good faith of British diplomacy since 1904, and conceived in particular a great admiration for Sir Edward Grey. "It seems to me," he wrote me once in a time of sorrow, "that most people's chief consolation for the loss of their friends now is just the

sense of the absolute rightness of what they have done and the way they died."

Like a true soldier, he was always angry at what he considered to be slanders of the enemy. He detested atrocity-mongers, and for a time disbelieved the stories of German cruelties in Belgium. When the Bryce Report was published and the evidence became too strong, he was convinced. But he never spoke of these subjects, and the only reference to them which I can find in his letters is a short and unexplained sentence: "It seems that the Germans have taken to torturing their prisoners." I think that with him, as with others who had joined the army at the same time, this "sense of the absolute rightness of what they had done" became stronger as time passed. But, to the end, his letters find room for mockery of the anti-German mania of the more vulgar press, and of the old ladies who knew on unimpeachable authority that this or that eminent and august person was a "Potsdammer" or a convicted spy.

His campaigning in France lay through a period of discouragement to the British cause. The Russians had met their great defeat on the Dunajec before he left England, and continued steadily to retreat during the whole period. This great disaster reacted upon our fortunes everywhere. The Gallipoli expedition, on which Heath had pinned his most confident hopes, first dragged and then slowly failed; the final disappointment at Suvla Bay took place on August 15. On September 25 the great Allied offensive in Champagne and towards Loos began with terrific carnage and large success, but the losses were too severe and the difficulties ahead increased too fast to permit of the advance being continued. During September it had become more clear than ever that the

Allies could not expect any armed help from America, and by the first weeks of October the Kings of Bulgaria and Greece had apparently made up their minds that our cause was safely lost. Venizelos was dismissed; Serbia betrayed by her ally and invaded by her enemies.

Meanwhile Heath's own health was not very good. He had an attack of some sort of blood-poisoning, which was at first taken for scarlet fever. On July 21 he was wounded in the scalp by a splinter of shell, while resting in billets, and insisted on returning to work before it was healed. He remained unwell for some time afterwards. Still he found a constant interest in the care of his platoon, and a great pleasure in the men's affection. His letters remain steadily cheerful. Discomforts, when mentioned at all, are always treated humorously. He describes one of his men who had just written an indignant letter about "them shirkers at home" enjoying themselves, "while we are bearing the blunt"; and explains that his own platoon at this moment is "bearing the blunt" by lying in the sun asleep or playing cards in a beautiful rose-garden. Another time he has just been so bold as to give a clean shirt to a major; "rather like giving a bun to an elephant." Graver misfortunes are met in the same way: "The poor old Grand Duke seems to be well on his way to Nijni-Novgorod." Now and again comes a sudden blaze of anger against the grousers and backbiters at home: "What I should really like would be to go down Fleet Street with a machine-gun." Just once or twice comes a sentence revealing, like a flash of light on an abyss, the true horror of the things he did not speak about: "These are days when men should be born without mothers."

Like nearly all thoughtful men he was often troubled

beforehand by the doubt whether his courage and endurance would stand the strain of real war. However, at the very beginning he distinguished himself by a solitary scouting expedition in which he discovered a German listening-post, and, later on, the only thing that seems to have disturbed him much was the nerve-racking effect of the gigantic artillery. He wished "the great bullies of guns" would go away, and leave the infantry to settle the war in a nice clean manner. "If I had my way I should bar out every weapon but the rifle; and even then," he adds, "I should prefer brickbats at three quarters of a mile." In the middle of August his most intimate friend in the company, Saumarez Mann, was very badly wounded while cutting grass in front of the parapet. Mann was still an undergraduate at Balliol, and Heath's letters convey echoes of the chaff that passed between the two friends. "Mann always makes me laugh; he is so big," says one; while another orders with care a box of chocolates for Mann's twenty-first birthday. Fortunately Mann's wound proved not to be mortal. Early in September came a greater blow, the news of G. L. Cheesman's death at Gallipoli. There was probably not a man in the army who was more vividly conscious than he of all that Constantinople meant in history or more thrilled by the prospect of fighting for its recovery.

At last, on October 8, the end came. It was Heath's twenty-eighth birthday. The battalion held a series of trenches in front of Vermelles, across the Hulluch road, in that stretch of ghastly and shell-tortured black country which we now think of as the Loos Salient. For the whole day there had been an intense German bombardment, tearing and breaking the trenches, and presum-

ably intended to lead up to a general infantry attack. It was decided, in order to prevent this plan developing, that the Sixth Battalion should attempt an attack on the enemy at "Gun Trench." This was a very difficult enterprise in itself, and doubly so to troops already worn by a long and fierce bombardment. The charge was made by "A" Company about 6.30 and beaten back. It was followed by a series of bombing attacks, for which a constant supply of bombs had to be kept up across the open. It was during this work that Arthur Heath fell, shot through the neck. He spoke once, to say, "Don't trouble about me," and died almost immediately.

The whole operation was finely carried out. It failed to take Gun Trench, but it seems to have paralyzed the attacking power of the enemy. And the Official Report states that the commander "considered that the 6th R.W. Kents and 7th E. Surrey showed fine military qualities in undertaking an attack after such a bombardment continued throughout the day." As for Arthur Heath himself, his platoon sergeant wrote to his parents: "It will console you to know that a braver man never existed. Some few minutes before he met his death I heard the exclamation: 'What a man! I would follow him anywhere!' These few words express the opinion of every one who came into contact with him, and we all feel proud to have had the honour of serving under him." Another friend, who knew him but slightly, wrote: "I can only think of him as one who has left a track of light behind."

Four New College scholars of exceptional intellect and character entered the university in 1905 and obtained Firsts in their Final Schools in 1909 — Arthur Heath,

Leslie Hunter, R. C. Woodhead, and Philip Brown. And now all four lie buried on the Western front. Each, of course, had his special character and ways and aims; but to one who knew them well, there comes from all of them a certain uniform impression, the impression of an extraordinary and yet unconscious high-mindedness. It is not merely that they were clever, hard-working, conscientious, honourable, lovers of poetry and beauty; the sort of men who could never be suspected of evading a duty or, say, voting for their own interest rather than the common good. It was, I think, that the standards which had become the normal guides of life to them were as a matter of plain fact spiritual standards, and not of the world nor the flesh. The University of Oxford has doubtless a thousand faults, and the present writer would be the last to palliate them; but it has, by some strange secret of its own, preserved through many centuries the power of training in its best men a habit of living for the things of the spirit. Its philosophy is broad and always moving; it is rooted in no orthodoxy, and the chief guide of its greatest school is Hellenism, not scholasticism. Yet it keeps always living, in generation after generation of its best students, a tone of mind like that of some cassocked clerk of the Middle Ages, whose mental life would shape itself into two aims: in himself to glorify God by the pursuit of knowledge, and among his fellow men to spread the spirit of Christ.

Such language may sound strained as applied to a group of men who were earning their living amongst us in perfectly ordinary ways, as teachers, writers, doctors, civil servants, some of them in the law or in business; but it implies nothing strained or specially high-strung in the quality of their daily lives. There is always a

religion of some sort at the root of every man's living. Every man is either willing or not willing to sacrifice himself to something which he feels to be higher than himself, though if he is sensible, he will probably not talk much about it. And men of conscience and self-mastery are fully as human, as varied, and as interesting as any weaklings or picturesque scoundrels are.

Perhaps the first thing that struck one about Arthur Heath was his gentleness and modesty. "It was fine," says one of his superior officers at Churn camp, "to see a first-rate intellect such as his applied to a practical matter that was strange to him. And he was so modest about himself, and never dreamed how we all admired him." The last words strike one as exactly true. Another quality was his affectionateness, or rather the large space that affection occupied in his mind. Affection, indeed, is too weak a term to describe the feeling that seems to glow behind the words of many of his letters home; for instance, the beautiful letter to his mother, written on July 11, about the prospect of death. He was a devoted son and brother, interested in every detail of home life, and not forgetting the family birthdays. And the same quality pervaded much of his relations towards friends and acquaintances. He was the sort of man whom people confide in, and consult in their troubles.

He was a bold thinker; he held clear opinions of his own on all sorts of subjects. He often differed from other people, especially from people in authority. Yet he was never for a moment bitter or conceited or anxious to contradict. There was no scorn about him; and his irrepressible sense of fun, so far from being unkind, had an element of positive affection in it.

In comparing him with other men who have fought

and fallen in this war, I feel that one of his most marked characteristics was his instinct for understanding. In the midst of strong feeling and intense action his quiet, penetrating intelligence was always at work. Even at the front, where most men become absorbed in their immediate job, he was full of strategical problems, of the war as a whole and the effect of one part of it on another, of home politics, and the influences he believed to be baneful or salutary. His courage was like that of the Brave Man in Aristotle, who knows that a danger is dangerous, and fears it, but goes through with it because he knows that he ought. He liked to understand what he was doing. He was ready, of course, to obey without question, but he would then know that he was obeying without question. He was ready to give his life and all the things that he valued in life, his reading and music and philosophy, but he liked to know what he was giving them for. After a study of the causes of the war, he writes from France: "One of the few things in all these intrigues and ambitions that can be considered with pleasure is the character of Sir Edward Grey. . . . I am very puzzled about home politics; cannot understand the Welsh miners or the Coalition, and feel all convictions shaken except a profound belief in Mr. Asquith."

After his first wound: "Fear is a very odd thing. When I was up in the trenches about thirty yards from them [the enemy], I got over the parapet and crawled out to examine a mine-crater without anything worse than a certain amount of excitement. But when we are back here [in Brigade Reserve] and the shells start screaming over, I feel thoroughly afraid, and there is no denying it." A superior officer once warned him not to think so highly of his men: he should accept it as a fact that

"these men are damned stupid, and what's more, they're not anxious to do more than they can help." Heath bowed to the officer's superior knowledge; yet he did think he found in even the less promising men a certain intelligence and keenness: "In fact I am like the man who tried to be a philosopher, but found that cheerfulness *would* break in."

He never groused about hardships, nor yet about the evils of war. The war was something he had to carry through, and he would make the best of it until it killed him. He realized the horror of a war of attrition, and the true nature of these days when "men should be born without mothers." Yet he took considerable interest in numerical calculations about the length of time that would be necessary, at the existing rate of wastage, to make the German line untenable. And his calculations always pointed towards the certainty of our ultimate victory. When a phrase of poignant pathos occurs in the letters, it is never by his own intention. Thus, in speaking of some particular operation of trench warfare he writes: "Gillespie taught it to me, and now I am teaching Geoffrey Smith." Gillespie, Heath, Geoffrey Smith; it was in that order, too, that they taught one another a greater lesson. A. D. Gillespie died a brave death in September, 1915, Heath in October of the same year, and Geoffrey Smith in the July following. But the full tragedy underlying the words can be realized only by one who knew those three rare spirits.

A wonderful band of scholars it was that went out in these days from William of Wykeham's old foundation, young men quite exceptional in intellectual powers, in feeling for the higher values of life, in the sense of *noblesse oblige*, and in loving-kindness towards the world

of men. The delicate feeling which forms the foundation of scholarship was in them not a mere function of the intellect, but a grace pervading all their human relations. No grossness or graspingness ever found a foothold in them, no germ of that hate which rejoices to believe evil and to involve good things with bad. Heath played his beloved German music the night before he left Oxford. Cheesman's latest letter to me was a defence of the Turks in Gallipoli from some misconception which he thought was in my mind. Woodhead, waiting to advance under machine-gun fire and knowing that the first man to rise would be a certain victim, chose carefully the right moment and rose first. The only words that Philip Brown spoke after he was mortally wounded were words of thought and praise for his servant. Leslie Hunter, on the day before he died, spoke to a friend of his presentiment that death was coming, and then lay for a while in a grassy meadow, singing, "*Im wunderschönen Monat Mai.*"

While I was writing these lines came the news of another of the band, a most brilliant young scholar and historian, Leonard Butler, together with his colonel's statement in the "Times" notice: "I never saw a finer death." And this morning, as I revise them, yet another: not indeed a member of this group, since he was older and had already achieved fame on a wider field of action, but one whom I think of still as a young Wykehamist undergraduate and Ireland Scholar, by nature and fortune perhaps the most richly gifted of all, and as swift as any to give up to the cause that summoned him all the shining promise of his life — Raymond Asquith.

One after another, a sacrifice greater than can be counted, they go; and will go until the due end is won.

At the close of the Michaelmas Term of 1914 there was a memorial service at New College, as in other colleges, for those of its members who had fallen in the war. It seemed a long list even then, though it was scarcely at its beginning. And those who attended the service will not forget the sight of the white-haired warden, full of blameless years, kneeling before the altar on the bare stones, and praying that it might be granted to us, the survivors, to live such lives as these young men who had gone before us. His words interpreted, I think, the unconscious feeling of most of those who heard him. It certainly changes the whole aspect of the world, even to a man whose life is advanced and his character somewhat set, when the men who were his intimate friends are proved to have had in them, not merely the ordinary virtues and pleasantnesses of common life, but something high and resplendent which one associates with the stories of old saints or heroes; still more when there is burned into him the unforgettable knowledge that men whom he loved have died for him.

XIII

THE TURMOIL OF WAR[1]

(March, 1917)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: —

I have seldom had a more difficult speech to deliver than that which lies before me this evening. Often enough since choosing the subject, I have had an impulse to turn tail and fly for refuge to some comparatively simple and undisturbing question, like the internal relations of the Ukrainian peoples or the Serbs-Bulgarian Dialects of the district of Monastir. But in times like these if a man undertakes to speak to his fellow citizens in such a society as this, serious and half-religious in its outlook, it seems a clear duty that he should speak sincerely of the subject that is most in his mind. I choose the subject about which I feel most uncomfortable hour by hour of my life; and though I have little to say that we have not all of us thought and said before, I dare say there will be some comfort to me and to others who feel as I do in our having tried to puzzle the matter out together.

The objects of this society are two, and are expressed in its name. First, we are ready to Fight; we are not pacifists; we believe in the duty of fighting. But secondly, we fight only for the Right. We dedicate our effort as a society to the Right and all that it implies: public faith between States and Governments, justice

[1] Address to the Fight for Right League, March 4, 1917.

between the strong and the weak, peace and good-will between man and man, between nation and nation. We oppose with all our strength the rule of naked Force, as it seems to us to be asserted by the German Government. And, deliberately and, as we believe, of necessity, in order to overthrow this assertion of the rule of Force, we appeal to Force as our champion. This sounds illogical, but it is not so. We appealed first to all other means. We began with no ill-will, with no touch of secret ambition. We tried to maintain the power of Right by arbitration or conciliation between us and our neighbours. And in the last resort, when we did appeal to Force, it was not to mere naked Force, not to Force as a master. We did not put the sword upon the throne. The Force we appealed to was the obedient minister of a free and constitutional State, which was seeking not conquest nor its own aggrandizement, but the reëstablishment of Right among the nations of Europe. That was the attitude in which Great Britain took up the gage of battle. "We hope," said our great Prime Minister in November, 1914, "that the longer the trial lasts and the more severe it becomes, the more clearly shall we emerge from it the champions of a just cause; and we shall have achieved, not only for ourselves, — for our direct and selfish interests are small, — but for Europe and for civilization and for the great principle of small nationalities, and for liberty and justice, one of their most enduring victories."

Let us take those aims, for a moment, one by one. We shall "achieve an enduring victory," first, "for ourselves, but our own interests are small." That has been made plain, for example, in the Allied Note to President Wilson about our war aims. In that rehearsal of the

larger aims of all the Allied Powers, Great Britain was conspicuous in that she asked for nothing. (I do not, of course, say that we shall in the end acquire nothing. But if we end by allowing our colonies to annex certain of the conquered German colonies, or if we ourselves continue to hold the district of Bagdad and Kut, it will certainly not be due to any deliberate plan conceived from the beginning.)

"A victory for the independence of small nationalities": is that too much to claim? No. For clearly the freedom of every nation in Europe is menaced by the policy which forced war upon Serbia in spite of all concessions, and destroyed Belgium in spite of her absolute innocence and her explicit treaty. If that policy triumphed, how much freedom would remain to Holland, Denmark, Switzerland, or any other of the smaller nations?

"A victory for civilization": is that too much? No. The appalling barbarization of warfare, the atmosphere of deliberate and obscene terrorism, the studied contempt for international movements and Public Right which Germany has introduced as an essential element in her war-policy, are not only a danger to civilization in the future, but are in themselves the absolute denial and destruction of civilization. Nor could any movement be compatible with the future of civilization which rested on the exaltation of Turkey, by war in Europe and in Asia by hideous massacre.

"A victory for Europe": is that too much? At least it is clear that almost all free Europe believes we are fighting for her. Germany and the Austrian Government and apparently the Swedish Government think otherwise. France, Russia, Portugal, Italy, Serbia,

Montenegro, Rumania, a large proportion of the subjects of Austria, and most of the peoples of Holland, Norway, Denmark, and Spain are with us, as well as the greatest and most fearless of all neutrals, the United States of America. There might be a Europe, there might be a rich and fairly peaceful Europe, under Germany's domination; but the peace would be, as Lord Grey has called it, "an iron peace," and the riches would be produced for German masters by masses of men without freedom and almost without nationality.

"A victory for liberty and justice": that is the clearest claim of all. No liberty could live either under or beside a victorious Prussia, and it was only Germany's set and deliberate refusal to consider the claims of justice that precipitated the war. Since I wrote these words our claim to represent the cause of liberty has received a tremendous confirmation. Our ally Russia has become a free nation. The event has shown that the cause of autocracy and the cause of the Allies could not remain permanently reconciled; the Russia that is our natural comrade in arms must be Russia free.

The case seems clear. The policy of this League seems both intelligible and justified. We will fight, we will kill and suffer and die, rather than willingly see all conscience banished from international policy, or betray ourselves and weaker nations to the mercy of triumphant wrong.

And yet — is it so plain as all that? We know it is not. We all know — or, if we do not, Thucydides did his best two thousand years ago to explain it to us — that war, at any rate between States of approximately equal power, is not an instrument that can be directed with

precision to a perfectly definite aim and turned off and on like a garden hose. It is a flood on which, when once the flood-gates are opened, those who have opened them will be borne away. In August, 1914, for the sake of our own rights, of justice and of humanity, we appealed to Force. Force entered and took the centre of the stage. It became a struggle, not of Right against Force, but of one Force against another. The struggle deepened, became closer, more terrible, more fraught with anxiety. It became very nearly a struggle for existence. We gave all our minds to it. Gradually, inevitably, increasingly, the fight began to absorb us. And while the men who guided England and expressed the spirit of England in the early days of the war were men of lofty spirit and a profound sense of responsibility, idealists like Sir Edward Grey and philosophers like Mr. Asquith and later on Mr. Balfour, as the war proceeded, there came a change. England ceased to be occupied with questions of right and wrong; she became occupied with the questions of fighting and killing. We turned, so to speak, from the men who could give wise counsel; we called on all who could fight, and we liked best those who could fight hardest.

And here comes the subject of my address, a subject that is rather terrible to a man of conscience. Do you remember how Sir Francis Drake once had to hang one of his officers; and how before executing the sentence he passed some time in prayer, and then shook hands with the offender? That is the sort of spirit, perhaps the only spirit, in which any man of conscience can without inward misery approach the killing and torturing of his fellow creatures. He is ready, if need be, to shed blood; but he must know that he does it for the Right, and be-

cause he must. It would sicken him to think that while doing it, he was secretly paying off old scores, or making money out of it, or, still worse, enjoying the cruelty. This slaying of men, if you do it for the right motive, may be a high and austere duty; if you admit any wrong motive, it begins to be murder — and hypocritical murder.

And yet, as soon as you let loose in war the whole of a big nation, you have handed over that high and austere duty to agents who cannot possibly perform it: to masses of very ordinary people, and not only of ordinary people, but of stupid and vulgar and drunken and covetous and dishonest and tricky and cruel and brutal people, who will transform your imagined crusade into a very different reality.

When the war was flung into the midst of all this seething, heterogeneous mass of men who make up Great Britain or the British Empire, it called out naturally those who in their different ways were most akin to it. It called out both the heroes and the ruffians. But in the main, as the war atmosphere deepened among the civilian population, the men who were interested in justice became unimportant; those who were specially interested in humanity were advised to be discreet in their utterances. It is quite others who came to the front: the men — for such exist in all countries — who believe in Force and love Force; who love to wage bloody battles, or at least to read about them and lash their younger neighbours into them; who rage against the "mere lawyers" who care about right and wrong; despise the puling sentimentalists who have not deadened their hearts to all feeling of human compassion; loathe the doctrinaire politicians who dare to think about the

welfare of future generations instead of joining in the carnival of present passion.

What is to be our attitude to this change? Does it invalidate the whole position of our Society? I think not.

We knew we should let loose these evil powers, but we believe we can cling to our duty in spite of them. It was part of the price we had to pay, if we wished to save Europe, to save the small nationalities, to save liberty and civilization. And it is by no means all the price. It is only an extra. It comes as an addition to the long bill of dead and wounded, of the mountains of unatoned and inexplicable suffering, the vista of future famine and poverty, and the beggary of nations. And it is not the only extra. There is something that goes wrong in us ourselves.

On every side one sees the influence of that queer, distorting force which protects our tired nerves by cheapening and marring all our high emotions. We entered on this war in a state of moral exaltation. If ever in the course of my life I have been privileged to look on pure heroism, it was in some of the young men who volunteered for military service in the first few months of the war. It is not difficult to get vigorous young men to risk their lives. But the men I mean did far more than that. They gave up almost all they cared for in life, all their enjoyments, their intellectual aims, the causes for which they were working; they gave up a life of constructiveness and brotherly love, to which they were devoted, to undertake a life, not only of great hardship and danger, — that is simple, — but one consecrated to malignity and destruction, which they loathed. And the motive which impelled and inspired them was a faith, a very

high faith, that a crisis had arisen in the history of mankind which made this strange sacrifice desirable. A vast crime was suddenly before us; a crime striding to accomplishment, almost triumphant, and so dire in its ultimate meaning that each of these men felt within him, "That must never happen while I live!" In that faith they turned from their old ideals, from their hopes, their causes, their books, their music, their social work, or their philosophy; they served to the utmost of their strength and the greater number of them are now dead.

I speak of the class of men I knew best. But the same spirit in different degrees ran through the larger part of Great Britain.

That is how it happens. You face the beginning of a war with intense feeling. You feel the casualties, you feel the pain of the wounded, you feel the horror of what your friends have to do, as well as what they have to suffer. You feel also the uplifting emotion of sacrifice for a great cause.

But you cannot possibly go on feeling like that. War is a matter of endurance, and if you allow yourself to feel continually in this intense way, you will break down. In mere self-protection a man, whether soldier or civilian, grows an envelope of defensive callousness. Instinctively, by a natural process, you avoid feeling the horrors, and you cease to climb the heights of emotion. After all, an average man may be sorry for the Czecho-Slovaks; he may even look them up on a map; but he cannot go on grieving about them year in and year out. He may realize in flashes the actual meaning in terms of human misery of one hour of the war which he is not fighting indeed, but ordering and paying for. But he could not live if he did so steadily. He proceeds, quite

naturally, first to put the enemy's suffering out of account. *He* deserves all he gets, anyhow. Then the sufferings of the victim nations: he is very sorry, of course, for Belgium, Poland, Serbia, Rumania, the Armenians. But it is no good being sorry. Better to get on with the war! Then the sufferings of his own people, the young men and middle-aged men who have gone out to France or the East. He cannot quite forget these; he must think about them a good deal and the thought is painful. So he transforms them. When they once put on khaki, they became, he imagines, quite different. They were once James Mitchell the clerk, Thomas Brown the railway porter, John Baxter the Wesleyan carpenter. But now they are "Tommies." And we invent a curious psychology for them, to persuade ourselves somehow that they like the things they do, and do not so very much mind the things they suffer.

And then, in spite of all this protective callousness, in spite of the pretences we build up in order to make ourselves comfortable, there continues underneath the brazen armour of our contentment a secret horror, a raging irritation — how shall I put it? It is the ceaseless, bitter sobbing of all that used once to be recognized as the higher part of our nature, but now is held prisoner, stifled and thrust aside . . . because the need of the world is for other things. And some of us throw up the moral struggle and go blindly for pacifism. (I met a man lately who had left the useful and peaceful work he had been allowed by the military authorities to follow, because he felt he could never find peace except in prison or on the scaffold.) Most of us, I believe, do our duty as best we can; trying amid so much heroic fortitude to show a little decent power of self-denial, and amid such

oceans of cruelty to scatter the few drops of personal kindness that we can. And a third set, almost all civilians, led partly by party passion and self-interest, partly by the overflow of angry impulses which cannot find vent in honest fighting, partly by mere vulgarity and love of excitement, dance a kind of devil's chorus in fury lest any calm wisdom, any reasoned judgement, any scrupulous honour, should still be allowed a voice in the future of England.

Let me read you some passages from a letter written by a soldier, not an officer, about his impressions of us civilians in England when he returned after a long and meritorious time of service in France. He seems to see us across a gulf of mutual misunderstanding.

You speak lightly [he says]; you assume that *we* shall speak lightly of things . . . which to us are solemn or terrible. You seem ashamed, as if they were a kind of weakness, of the ideas which sent us to France, and for which thousands of sons and lovers have died. You calculate the profits to be derived from War after the War, as though the unspeakable agonies of the Somme were an item in a commercial proposition. You make us feel that the country to which we have returned is not the country for which we went out to fight. . . . We used to blaspheme and laugh and say, "Oh, it's only the newspapers. People at home can't really be like that." But after some months in England I have come to the conclusion that your papers don't caricature you so mercilessly as we supposed. No, the fact is you and we have drifted apart. We have slaved for Rachel, but it looks as if we had got to live with Leah.

He speaks of the ideas with which we entered upon the war.

How often, fatigued beyond endurance, or horrified by one's own actions, does one not recur to those ideas for support and

consolation! It is worth it, because . . . It is awful, but I need not loathe myself because . . . We see things which you can only imagine. We are strengthened by reflections which you have abandoned. . . . While you seem to have been surrendering your creeds with the nervous facility of a Tudor official, our foreground may be different, but our background is the same. It is that of August to November, 1914. We are your ghosts.

I can forgive you for representing war as a spectacle instead of a state of existence. I suppose that to a correspondent who is shepherded into an observation post on a show day, it does seem spectacular. But the representation of the human beings concerned is unpardonable. There has been invented a kind of conventional soldier, whose emotions and ideas are those which you find it most easy to assimilate with your coffee and marmalade. And this "Tommy" is a creature at once ridiculous and disgusting. He is represented as invariably "cheerful," as revelling in the excitement of war, as finding sport in killing other men, as "hunting Germans out of dug-outs as a terrier hunts rats," as overwhelming with kindness the captives of his bow and spear. The last detail is true to life, but the emphasis you lay on it is both unintelligent and insulting. Do you expect us to hurt them or starve them?

Of the first material reality of war, from which everything else takes its colour, the endless and loathsome physical exhaustion, you say little; for it would spoil the piquancy, the verve, of the picture. Of your soldiers' internal life, the constant collision of contradictory moral standards, the liability of the soul to be crushed by mechanical monotony . . . the sensation of taking a profitless part in a game played by monkeys and organized by lunatics, you realize, I think, nothing. Are you so superficial as to imagine that men do not feel emotions of which they rarely speak: or do you suppose that, as a cultured civilian once explained to me, these feelings are confined to "gentlemen" and are not shared by "common soldiers"? . . .

They carry their burden with little help from you. For when men work in the presence of death, they cannot be satisfied with conventional justifications of a sacrifice which seems to the poor weakness of our flesh intolerable. They hunger for an assurance which is absolute, for a revelation of

the spirit as poignant and unmistakable as the weariness of their suffering bodies. . . . To most of us it must come from you or not at all. For an army does not live by munitions alone, but also by fellowship in a moral idea or purpose. And that, unless you renew your faith, you cannot give us. You cannot give it us because you do not possess it.

These are grave charges. I will presently say a word or two in answer to them, but for the present the serious fact for us to realize is that such charges are made. The man who makes them is not a pacifist, but a good soldier; not an eccentric, not a sentimentalist nor a man of immature judgement. Quite the reverse. And he feels, on returning to England after two years of war, that we have not only sent him and his fellows out to die for us, but that in their absence we have betrayed them. We sent them out to fight for an England which was the champion of Freedom and the Human Conscience and International Right; and when once they were gone we cast these phrases away, having no more use for them, and left them to fight and die for the "Times" and the "Daily Mail."

Now, there are many pleas that can be urged in extenuation of these charges. I will mention them presently. I wish first to urge another point. Admit for the moment that they are largely true; that we *have* fallen from our ideals. Would it have altered our action, ought it to have altered our action, in August, 1914? If we had known that, in addition to the awful waste of human life, in addition to the incalculable sum of suffering, in addition to the desperate impoverishment of Europe, the war was likely to bring upon us a certain lowering of the national ideals, and a time of bitter and perhaps sordid reaction; if we had known all this, should we still

have declared war against the German Empire? My answer is, Yes.

As a matter of fact we did know it, or at least surmise it. I was looking back at some speeches I made myself in 1914 and 1915 and I find that I mentioned explicitly every one of these evils among the probable results of the war. And I have no doubt that others did the same. We foresaw it; and we disliked and dreaded the prospect. We would have done almost anything, have sacrificed almost anything, to avoid both the war and its consequences; but we were faced by the one thing we could not do, we were asked for the one sacrifice we could not give. We could not agree that, while we still had life and strength, the world should with our consent be conquered by naked Force and held down by Terrorism.

However badly we may have been, or are yet likely to be, demoralized by this war, that is a lesser evil than if all free Europe were conquered by Germany. And even to be conquered by Germany now, after all we have suffered, would be a lesser evil than to have submitted to her without a struggle. If after the invasion of Belgium the rest of Europe had submitted to the Germans without a struggle, it would have saved millions of lives, tons of treasure, oceans of suffering; but it would have meant a greater evil to mankind than any such measurable losses. It would have meant that the Spirit of Man itself was dead.

And now for my pleas in extenuation. I think the charges brought by my friend in that letter (the whole letter, by the way, has been printed as a leaflet and can be bought from the "Nation" office) are in some degree true. At least they waken in my own mind a feeling of mixed guilt in myself and resentment against others

more guilty. But I believe that, in the natural pain and shock of his disappointment, he has felt the marks of our corruption to be more permanent and deep-rooted than they are. Many of the symptoms that seem worst are really misinterpreted.

Have you noticed how, at a play, when a particularly moving or touching moment occurs, you will always hear some people laugh? You probably feel in your fury that they are brute beasts, outcasts from the human race; but they are not. The explanation merely is that, as is usual at touching moments, they had two contrary impulses at the same time, one bidding them cry and one bidding them laugh. And, in a natural self-protection, they checked the first and indulged the second.

All this callous cheerfulness, all this gay brutality, with which people sometimes speak of bursting shells and "the leg of a fat Hun performing circles in the air," or of poking into dug-outs with bayonets and "picking out the Boches like periwinkles on a pin" . . . all that loathsome stuff is to a great extent mere self-protection. It is a kind of misplaced tact. Something more real, more near the truth, more undisguisedly horrible, is just round the corner of the speaker's mind, and he is determined not to let it show itself. If it emerged, it would make every one feel awkward. . . . I do not say that this sort of language is not bad; it is, very bad, both in origin and in effect. But I do say strongly that it is not profound, and is not what it appears to be.

Similarly, when a man with a conscience or sense of justice in him goes along the streets of London and looks at the posters, his heart sometimes fails him and he thinks, "Is this the nation for which I am fighting, and for which my friends have died?" And the answer is

No. It is not. Those posters do not represent the nation. They do not really represent even the wretched man who made them. They are based, no doubt, on something in his mind. But that something has been first distorted in the way he imagines will please people inferior to himself; next, concentrated and squashed so as to be expressed in two or three words; and then "gingered up" to attract the notice of a tired and busy crowd whose eyes are dazed with hosts of similar placards.

Our nation itself is nothing like as unjust and greedy, nothing like as factious and fond of lies, as intolerant, as cruel, or as stupid as it would seem, and does seem, to a foreigner studying the streets and the newspapers. For a purely temporary cause, we cannot express ourselves freely while the war lasts. "Why not?" asks some unrepentant Radical, and the answer is easy. Simply because there are sixty million people listening who want to kill us, and we must be careful that they do not overhear anything that may help them in doing so. Parliament is muzzled and largely impotent; and Parliament is the one place, the one great institution, in which any statement, however unpopular, can be made; and where any false statement made can be challenged and answered.

That is what makes Parliament the unique and irreplaceable guardian of our liberties. The newspapers can never possibly take its place. Many of them, I gladly admit, do their best under uphill conditions. I am often filled with admiration for the power with which some few of our great journalists maintain day after day, under every circumstance of trial, the same high level of thought and style, of self-command and of patriotism.

But such men are striving against the stream. Such censoring of newspapers as there is tells almost entirely in one direction, and that the same direction as popular prejudice. It is no corrective. While war lasts, every voice, every fact, every principle, which seems likely to weaken the war-spirit is feared and disapproved and often suppressed. I do not wish to complain of this one-sided censorship, though every one admits that its working is far from perfect. I only want to point out that it is one-sided. In every subject you can take, as it were, a sort of central line which represents roughly the opinion of the moderate man; other opinions are either to the left of it or to the right of it. I do not, of course, say that the moderate man is necessarily right. But suppose you suppress or fiercely discourage all expression of opinion on one side of that line while allowing it perfect freedom on the other side; the result is obviously not a fair representation of the opinion of the country. Opinions which tell in favour of justice, of moderation, of all the qualities which mankind once thought good and will assuredly think good again, are suppressed or discouraged; the opposite opinions are let loose like wild asses stamping and braying above the graves of the dead. The spectacle that sickened my friend was not a true picture of the nation as it is, nor any reflection of the minds of the real men and women who go home at night to think much of their sons and husbands in the trenches, and a little also of the unhappy people in Serbia or Poland or France, or it may be in Germany. The outside spectacle presented by any nation is, I believe, nearly always a worse and uglier thing than the nature of any average individual. The men and women themselves are better than the newspapers and the streets.

Some of you will remember Plato's words in the "Republic," answering those who talk violently of the corruption of the young by false teachers, and his description of the real false teacher, the real sophist, to whom the corruption of the world is mostly due. Plato was not much afraid of sophists like Mr. Shaw or Mr. Morel or Mr. Snowden; what he dreaded was the great intangible sophist, with no body to be kicked and no soul to be damned, who lurks in posters and headlines and triumphant majorities.

Do you believe in young persons corrupted by bad teachers, and in individual bad teachers who corrupt them, to any serious extent? Don't you know that the people who talk like this are themselves the great False Teachers, and always educating people and finishing them off, young and old, men and women, exactly to their own taste?

When do you mean? said he.

Whenever they sit down together in a crowd, in a public meeting or a law court or a theatre or a camp, or any other collection of human beings, and make a great noise and shower praise on various things that are said or done and blame on others, always exaggerating, whichever it is; and they shout and clap their hands, till the walls of the place where they are and the rocks outside reëcho and multiply the noise of all the praise and blame? Where do you think a young man's heart sinks to then? What sort of private education can hold out, and not be flooded and swept away on the torrent of all that praise and blame? Till the lad agrees and says all the same things are good or evil as the crowd says, and follows the same lines as they follow and becomes just like them?

Of course he must.

Why, I have not yet mentioned the great Must. The real Must which these teachers and sophists bring to bear, if their words are not enough. Don't you know what waits for the man who is not persuaded, confiscations and outlawries and death?[1]

[1] Plato, *Republic*, p. 492.

I do not mean to say that these words specially apply to us. We have no confiscations or executions. We have, considering the greatness of the crisis and the prolonged strain, comparatively little of the persecuting spirit. The old Liberal England cannot be killed in a day. But I quote these words as a reminder of two things: first, that at present, as in all times of great public excitement, there is necessarily this huge, intangible sophist at his work, perverting wisdom and stirring up the impulses of terror and hatred; and secondly and with more emphasis, that, after all, he will not be there forever. Peace must come some day, and after peace eventually a return to normal life.

First, that the heart of England must not be judged by these outward manifestations; and next, that even these outward manifestations are not things that will last.

To those who are troubled, as I have been troubled, by thoughts of the kind raised by my friend's letter, I would venture to say, therefore, these words of counsel: First, let us be sure in our hearts that we are not ourselves false to the ideals of 1914; that the cause for which our friends have died or suffered, the cause for which we have assented to the shedding of torrents of innocent blood, shall never by us be degraded to anything lower than the cause of Public Right and of Human Freedom. Let us be sure that, to the best of our powers, we do not, we Englishmen for whom others have died, let the champion of Public Right turn aside to persecution or to lawlessness.

Next, let us keep our faith in our fellow man and our fellow countryman. He has astonished you by a heroism

and self-sacrifice which seemed to carry us back into the great ages of legend; do not now lose faith in him about lesser things. I do not ask you to idealize soldiers as such. It is a foolish practice. But remember that our soldiers are men, and very brave men, and that they have seen with their eyes and touched with the hands realities of which we scarcely dare to think. They have learned many things that we shall never know. And one thing they have learned is the nature of war. The general may possibly be a lover of war; while war lasts he is a very great man, indeed, and when peace comes he may have to retire upon half-pay to Brighton. But the men in the firing line are not lovers of war; hardly more so than the ravaged and tortured peasants of the invaded territories.

The women and old men at home may hate the enemy. Hate is an emotion which grows when you cannot give vent to normal anger. But the soldier has given more vent to his anger than he ever needed. He has often more sympathy than hate for the man in the trenches opposite, labouring miserably in the same mud and snow as himself, caught in the same bewildering net, deafened by the same monstrous noises and torn by the same shreds of iron.

Mercy has not passed out of the world, nor yet justice.

We are driven back to a sort of mysticism. Mankind knows that suffering itself is evil, but the wish to cause suffering is incalculably and disproportionately worse. All the cruel deeds, all the killing and maiming that is done day by day, night by night, over most of Europe, are not the real will, not the real free actions of any man. It is all a thing that has happened. Who among men ever wished for this war? We know that our own states-

men strained every nerve to prevent it. The soldiers fighting never wished it, nor yet the nations behind the soldiers. The world itself, the great, suffering world, never wished it. No one wished it. Not the great criminals and semi-maniacs in Germany and Austria who brought it about; not even they wished for this. What they wished was wicked enough, Heaven help them; when they dreamed of their triumphal march on Paris and the rest of the *frischer fröhlicher Krieg*, the "fresh and joyous war." But they never wished for this that has come. They thought it would be quite different. They are staring aghast, like Frankenstein, at the monster they have created.

It makes some difference in one's ultimate judgement, it saves one from a wild reaction against all organized human society as an accursed thing, if we realize that the war is not really the work of man's will. It is more a calamity to pity than a crime to curse.

The man who would prolong the war one day longer than is necessary for the establishment of the Right, if there is such a man, is if possible more wicked than the wretches who caused the war. Because he will know what he is doing, and they did not. Yet neither must we wish to end it a day sooner.

One is sometimes bewildered by this drag in two contrary directions, bewildered till it is hard to see clear. Then the right thing is to go back to August, 1914, and remember how we first faced the question of war, and how the great leaders of the nation then guided us. We knew the war was horrible, and we faced it as the alternative to something worse. I believe that, among the statesmen and others whom I knew personally, almost every thoughtful and honest man who then made up his

mind to support the war, faced it very much as he would face his own death. We made our choice, and we are paying, and for many months still shall go on paying, the price that we agreed to pay. All these deaths, all these broken hearts — we agreed to them beforehand.

But we agreed to them as the price to be paid for a certain result, the only result in the range of human practice which could justify so ghastly a traffic. We agreed to pay this price in part, perhaps, for the saving of our national existence, but beyond that, not for the aggrandizement of ourselves or our country, not for territory or trade or profit, most certainly not for the sake of injuring our rivals or taking revenge upon our enemies, or stealing advantages over our political opponents. We agreed to pay this price in order that the idea of Public Right should not be swept out of existence; that the free peoples of Europe should remain free, and some at least of her ancient sores be cleansed; and that the issue of our great ordeal should not be fixed by the mere tug of war between opposing national ambitions, but be permanently based, so far as we can attain it, on the organized conscience of Europe and the free judgement of the civilized world. In some such cause as that we will endure to any limit. For a baser cause the war would be murder.

THE END

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IMPRESSIONS OF SCANDINAVIA IN WAR TIME

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IMPRESSIONS OF SCANDINAVIA IN WAR TIME

I

SWEDEN

THERE is something generally sympathetic to Englishmen about all Scandinavians. We like the tall athletic figures, the manly and serious faces, the gentleness in normal intercourse touched by a suggestion of the possibility of terrific violence on occasion, the reasonableness with a background of mysticism. Something of this sort is common to all the Scandinavian nations, but their differences are almost as marked as their resemblances. Sweden especially stands apart from the other two. Her language seems older and more clear-cut, less worn-down at the edges. Her fine courtesy is more old-fashioned. Her beautiful literature broods more upon its memories and has more recently escaped from classicism. In spite of her increasing industrial prosperity the past has more hold upon her. The wars of the seventeenth century seem closer to one there than Napoleon's wars do in France. The noble families, the soldiers, the upper classes generally, cannot yet shake off the influence of those days of proud poverty and intoxicating glory. Charles XII, to say nothing of Gustavus Adolphus or of Bernadotte,

is a dangerous possession to a nation of only six million inhabitants. The portraits of the Great Adventurer seem to pursue one from town to town; the delicate face with its sinister half-smile, and a look in the eyes which suggests something like madness almost as much as his history does. It is a curious and, I fear, a significant coincidence that two learned men in different parts of Sweden assured me that the best modern historians were beginning to hold that the ordinary estimate of Charles XII was quite wrong; his political wisdom was really as great as his generalship!

The Past and the East: those are the two influences which may, from the British point of view, mislead Sweden. While Norway looks geographically to the west, to the open seas, to Great Britain and America, Sweden looks for most of her external ideas across the shut Baltic, to nothing but Finland and Russia and Germany. And there is no doubt which civilization she places first. The Finns tell her what they think of the Russian Government. Every one who crosses the sea brings back accounts of the dirt and slackness and corruption of the Russian rule and the cleanliness and efficiency of the German. A war between Russia and Germany seems to a sympathetic Swede like a war between all that is backward and stagnant on the one side, and all that is strong and enlightened on the other. And if any "new facts" come to shake his faith, there are always the Finns, with their unforgotten wrongs, to confirm it again, and there is the incessant German propaganda.

It is marvellous propaganda. It would be a mistake to think of it as all lies and treachery, or to

imagine that one could get such results from ordinary paid agents. Of course there are conscious inventions in abundance, like the official accounts of damage done in London by the Zeppelins; there are conscious forgeries, like the famous John Burns speech; deliberate and careful lies, like the false quotation from Sir E. Grey, given with date and inverted commas by the greatest German authorities, that "our gain from the war would be even greater if we joined in than if we stayed out." But underneath all the lying there is a burning enthusiasm and an "infinite power of taking trouble." The enthusiasm no doubt borders on insanity; it sometimes betrays its own ambitions, it sometimes contradicts itself, it often offends its hearers by its undisguised self-worship. But I think that both by its extreme thoroughness and by the contagious effect of strong faith the German propaganda is a tremendous force.

In Sweden it had a general start of twenty years or more in time of peace, and a special start of three weeks at the beginning of the war, when all communication with England was cut off and the full German legend was poured into Sweden in floods. For a long time Swedish newspapers got all their news from German sources. Probably Sweden is the only country in the world where humane and highly educated men think the sinking of the *Lusitania* a legitimate piece of policy, and the violation of Belgium a necessary act of self-defence. I even found a minister of religion, a pleasant and well-informed man, who considered that the proper way to have avoided the war was for Russia to have laid down her arms and asked the Kaiser, as a disinterested and

high-minded person, to arbitrate; and that even now the same method was still open to the Allies, and the same disinterested arbitrator still willing to act![1]

This sort of argument did not shake me much. Nor yet did the questions of a sad Finnish lady, who wanted to know why we blew Indian rajahs from guns for not volunteering, and why Lord Kitchener was so cruel to the fellaheen. Presumably she was quoting a German leaflet. Perhaps the quaintest argument that I met with anywhere was Professor Liszt's final defence of the invasion of Belgium: the invasion was perfectly legal, because it has been discovered that there was a treaty of 1810 by which German troops were to assist in garrisoning the fortresses of Liége and Namur. (This is worth thinking over. The treaty was made in 1810, in the midst of the Napoleonic war, and long before the Kingdom of Belgium existed! And it has been "discovered" afterwards, so that it was only from some unconscious impulse towards righteousness, and not from any knowledge of the treaty, that the German Army crossed the frontier to perform its long neglected duty in those garrisons.)

Rather more difficult to answer were the complaints against the Russian treatment of Finland, and the alleged atrocities of the first invasion of East Prussia. I had not at that time seen the report of a German pastor in the *Chronik der christlichen Welt*, 1916, No. 6, who had travelled over the district, and specially praises the conduct of the Russian armies

[1] Since the article was published, the gentleman here referred to has written to say that I did not understand his position. It was, perhaps, a little difficult to understand.

as humane, orderly, and free from excesses. (The report was blackened out by the Censor in Germany, but a few copies got across the frontier.) And I confess that I felt disheartened by one conversation with a pro-German who had known certain classes in England pretty well, and told me that he still read *The Times*. "You English cannot win; first, because you have no generals and no statesmen . . . you say you have? Very well, that may be so; but at any rate *it is clear that you do not trust them*. And secondly, because your working classes are disaffected; they support the war now, while they get high wages, but as soon as they begin to suffer they will turn against you." I answered as best I could; but I felt as if I had been stabbed in the back by an enemy in our own house.

Another useful weapon in the German arsenal consists in extracting the more violent statements of English writers and speakers. Most of these can be laughed away as the explosions of impulsive people who are enduring a great strain, and probably cannot find vent for their emotions in useful work; but there has certainly been some wild and unedifying talk by persons who ought to have known better.

II

SWEDEN

But beneath all this temporary froth of controversy, German influence has certainly done a great deal for Sweden. The army has been organized on German lines, and, so I am told, with a thoroughness of train-

ing which even surpasses its model. Special pains are taken to get intelligent and university-trained officers. The discipline is not brutal; the men individually are much finer in physique than the average German. And I imagine it would be hard to find anywhere a more effective force of five or six hundred thousand men than the Swedish army.

The universities, again, are remarkably good, and the standard in some cases, notably in the medical course, extraordinarily high. Here, too, there is a very strong German influence. Many of the professors write books in German. Many have held Chairs or teaching posts in Germany. They have nearly all studied in German universities. They write in German periodicals. The books they read on serious subjects are predominantly German. Indeed, a study of the Swedish bookshops is far from cheering to an Englishman or a Frenchman, though I think hardly any one could maintain that the German preponderance was simply due to the actual superiority of German *Wissenschaft*.

For one thing, the universities and the systems of study are practically on the same lines in Sweden and Germany. English books of learning run, so to speak, on rails of a different gauge, and do not exactly fit into the Swedish system. Then the German and Swedish booksellers have the same trade customs, quite different from ours. They send out books for "sale or return," they arrange their accounts and settle their bills in the same way and on the same dates. All this comes partly from geographical reasons, partly from the enterprising methods of German trade, partly, no doubt, from deliberate propaganda. If Ger-

many can settle what books a nation shall read, she hopes to have some control over what that nation will think.

A pro-German Court, where the Queen, a princess of Baden, makes little pretence of controlling or disguising her sentiments; a pro-German army, at least in its higher command; pro-German universities, and a widespread pro-German propaganda among the mass of the nation; given all these, it is a fortunate thing that to be pro-German is not the same thing as to wish to enter the war. The real "Activists" seem to be few and unpopular. The Government, a so-called "business government," put in by the King, and necessarily in close touch with the Court, has emphatically proclaimed its adherence to the principle of neutrality, and can only secure the support of the Lower House on that condition. Probably the same is true even of the Upper House. The commercial classes are said to be extremely averse from the thought of war. And, as far as I can judge of the universities, the Activists there seem to be a small minority.

Meantime, besides this ancient military and official Sweden, there is a great, new, industrial Sweden, and a very strong Socialist Party, with a leader of absolutely the first rank. Hr. Branting ought, in the natural development of things, before long to be Prime Minister. At present there are in the Lower House, eighty-seven Socialists, eighty-six Conservatives, and fifty-seven Liberals; while in the Upper House (elected in an artificial manner by various corporations) the Conservatives have a large majority. We may take it that all the Socialists and Liberals are strongly against taking part in the war, and

nearly all of them decidedly sympathetic to England and France. The result comes partly from natural sympathy with the liberal and democratic nations; but at one critical moment it was greatly influenced by Hr. Branting himself. A deputation of German Socialists came to Stockholm early in the war, as they also went to Switzerland and Italy, to beg for Socialist sympathy for their injured fatherland. The ties between Swedish and German Socialism had always been close; the anti-German case was then but little known in Sweden, and there was considerable danger of a bad split in the Socialist Party, which was only averted by the personal influence and outspoken courage of its leader. By this time the Liberal newspapers, especially the excellent and widely read *Dagens Nyheter*, have established their political position, and there is no danger of a change.

The feeling of the Liberals and Socialists is almost certainly also the feeling of the bulk of the working people. One heard instances of this on all sides. For example, a French lady living in Stockholm early in the war felt herself completely isolated till one day she met the postman delivering her letters. "Good news to-day," said the postman, and mentioned some French success. "Why do you call that good news?" asked the lady. "I thought you were all against us." "The people you meet in society may be against you," said the postman; "but the people I meet are all for you." She is said to have embraced him on the spot.

What, then, is the danger? It is one with which we are only too familiar. We have seen it at work in Turkey, in Bulgaria, in Greece, and even in Roumania, though, of course, it would be unjust to Sweden to

treat any of those different countries as a fair parallel to her. The country as a whole most certainly does not want to fight; the representative Chamber would not hear of it. The Democratic and Liberal Parties, which form the large majority, are actually friendly to us. But the Activists have their hands, not, indeed, on the machine, but at least rather dangerously near it. There is incessant German influence and propaganda, which might at some moment have the good fortune to rouse some wave of general feeling. There is the constant friction of the blockade, a friction which may at any moment suddenly become serious, and which the Swedish Government, on grounds which seem to us somewhat pedantic, will take no steps to soften or avert. It is not very profitable to try to calculate chances in a matter like this. Some good judges consider that the danger of Swedish intervention was at its maximum at the beginning of the war, recurred at the time of the Russian defeats, and is now past. It looks, at any rate, as if the Activists would need a considerable run of luck before they could overcome the resistance of the nation. Suppose, first, through folly on our part or intrigue on the enemy's, a first-class quarrel over the blockade; secondly, some action by ourselves or one of our Allies which alienated sympathies in neutral nations generally; thirdly, some internal development which intensified the fear of the upper classes that if peace continued the Socialists would get into power; and, lastly, a big German success on the north-east near Riga, threatening Petrograd in front, while a Finnish rising threatened it in the rear . . . with such a run of luck as that it is likely enough that Charles XII

would come to his kingdom, and the wry smile shine upon one more ruined people.

Meantime, it is worth remarking that in a great Socialist Congress at Stockholm about three weeks ago the majority carried, against Branting's wish, a vote resolving to meet by a general strike any attempt of the Government either to intervene in the war or to mobilize the army. Three of the chief speakers are now being prosecuted for high treason.

III

DENMARK

An extraordinary feeling of change comes over the traveller between Malmö and Copenhagen, while the ferry-boat wriggles its way across the Sound, avoiding the Danish mines. It is not only the great natural differences between the two territories: Sweden, a vast land of lake and moor, forest and glacier, stretching away to Lapland and the Arctic Circle, with an average population of rather less than thirty-three to the square mile; Denmark, a compact and highly cultivated little kingdom, with 178 inhabitants to the square mile, and held together almost like an ancient City-State by its splendid and ancient capital. It is not only that Denmark is modern and contemporary, while Sweden seems to float between the past and the future; that Denmark is a land of equality and democracy and general wealth, while Sweden is still aristocratic and conservative. It is that the war, which to Sweden is only a rather remote object of great interest, and perhaps some allurement, is hovering like a bird of

prey over Denmark. It is such a little land, so rich, so tempting; and the balance of advantage and disadvantage in tearing its heart out is really rather a delicate question for the crowding eagles on the frontier.

I met no one in Sweden who seemed to me really afraid; the fear of Russia was sometimes put forward for purposes of argument, but it was not the sort of fear that blanches any one's cheek. There were dislike of Russia, contempt for the Russian Government, and an apprehension that if Russia became unduly strong in Europe the ultimate results would be injurious. But not fear. And similarly there was no real hatred for any particular belligerent. But in Denmark there were the genuine emotions, hatred and well-grounded fear.

Denmark happens to be the one nation in Europe to which we have twice given real cause of offence. We bombarded Copenhagen and seized the Danish Fleet in 1807, not for any fault of the Danes, but merely because they refused to join our Alliance, and we knew that the Fleet was otherwise going to be seized by Napoleon. And in 1864 we led Denmark to expect that we would defend her against Prussia on the question of Schleswig-Holstein, and then failed to do so. But it looks as if the old resentment was almost forgotten in the presence of perils more imminent and far more dreadful. I rather expected beforehand that the Danes might feel towards us much as the Babes in the Wood felt towards the Ruffian who was of Milder Mood. But I underrated their generosity.

The people whom I met had their criticisms. They did not admire the whole of our Press. They thought

we rather neglected them; we did not read their literature or study their antiquities nearly as much as the Germans do, and our book-trade did not take nearly so much trouble to reach their markets. One great authority explained to my willing ears that the English language had no chance of competing with German in neutral countries until it reformed its spelling. But real sympathy with the Allies was in the air, as well as hatred of Germany. This sympathy blazed out in August last, when our submarine "E 15," which had run aground and was lying helpless on the Danish island of Saltholm, was shelled by a German cruiser. A Danish destroyer, with unhesitating gallantry, steamed straight between the cruiser and its prey; and when the bodies of the fifteen slain Englishmen were sent home for burial, the ship which carried them was simply smothered with Danish wreaths. It blazed out again when Björn Björnsen, the actor, now in the employ of a German news agency, attempted to make a public speech on the war in Copenhagen and was hooted down. And I met at least one person in a high position in Copenhagen whose official neutrality did not go very deep into his private life. The man I am thinking of told me with glee how a certain learned German had come up to him with smiles, holding out both his hands, whereupon my Dane had immediately clasped his behind his back, and said grimly, "What do you want?" On hearing that the desire of the German was something reasonable and legitimate, he had said, "My servant will attend to you," and so the interview ended.

The fact is, you cannot earnestly hate and dread the Germans without feeling some love and gratitude

towards the people who are resisting them and saving you from them. But it is not merely that the Danes know all about Belgium and the sea-murders and the Pan-German programme, and have seen some of the heart-rending letters which the conscript Schleswigers in the German Army have managed occasionally to smuggle through to their relations. It is also, unless I am deceived by Danish politeness, that they realize how moderately and decently, on the whole, Great Britain has used her strength. In command of the sea for over a hundred years, we have never touched or even threatened the colonies of the weaker Powers, Denmark, Holland, or Portugal; we have never shut their ships out of our harbours, or put obstacles in the way of their traders or their settlers. We are reaping a rich reward now in the goodwill of neutral countries for our long-continued policy of unaggressiveness and Free Trade.

But, of course, the Danes are nervous. A well-known savant and a leading business man explained their fears to me at length. Nobody fears that we mean any mischief to them, but they do fear that we may be inconsiderate, and indirectly, through impatience or recklessness, involve them in the fate of Belgium. The German army is camped on their land frontier, and the German navy cruising along their eastern coast. And if war came, long before we could give them any effective help, all Denmark except Copenhagen and Zealand would be in German hands. The military problem has been thought fully out, and Denmark will not attempt to defend anything but her capital and the island on which it stands.

There are three eventualities in particular that they fear. We might insist on landing troops on Danish territory. This would ruin them—unless, indeed, we could land half a million suddenly without the enemy interfering. They must either be over-run like Belgium, or else in defence of their neutrality take sides with their enemy against us. A more subtle form of this same danger is the question of our entering the Baltic. Geography is here rather hard upon us.

The Baltic has three entrances—the narrow Little Belt, the Sound between Denmark and Sweden, and the Great Belt running through the middle of Denmark, separating Zealand from Jutland. All are territorial waters, and all presumably mined; but only the Great Belt is deep enough for the passage of battleships. (The British submarines which got into the Baltic, and the German ships which got out, evidently dodged the mines and escaped the eyes of the authorities.) Now, if ever a detachment of our main Fleet determined to force its way into the Baltic, there would be a crisis at once. The ships would have to steam right between the two halves of Denmark, sweeping up the Danish mines and treating Denmark either as an ally or an enemy. The second case is too horrible to think of, and the first, unless our action came right at the end of the war, and was only the pursuit of a beaten opponent, would again bring the Germans over the border.

The third danger is the greatest, because it depends on Germany more than upon us. The man of business whom I mentioned was very earnest about it. Denmark is full of dairy farms and other agriculture;

full of butter and cream and pigs and cattle and all the things that Germany particularly wants. And the Danes, in due pursuance of their treaty with us, export them zealously elsewhere. The exact facts I do not pretend to know, but it is certain that Danish farm produce comes mostly across the seas to us, although the farmer could get a nearer market and far higher prices in Germany. Of course there is some trading with Germany, both licit and illicit, just as there is some leakage through the blockade. (The Danes say, not so much as through Holland, and the Dutch say, more.) Copenhagen certainly seems crowded with non-Danish persons of commercial habits, and sometimes of unprepossessing appearance, whose business is not very obvious; but that is true of all the large neutral towns. The problem simply is: at what point will it become profitable for Germany to take on another small and easy war, and incur a more absolute oversea blockade, for the sake of the food supplies of Jutland, which she can seize in twenty-four hours? Or, again, for Denmark, driven to desperation by some intolerable tightening of the blockade or some excessive strain upon her neutrality, to decide that, since she must be ruined either way, she would sooner be conquered by the English than by the Germans.

We have a good political position in Denmark, an upright Government, and a passionately friendly people, who detest German militarism and look to our victory as their only chance of continued independence. But one of the dreadful things one learns by study is that no political position is absolutely foolproof. Let us hope that our foreign policy will

remain in the same wise and temperate hands that guide it now, and the future is safe.

IV

NORWAY

Of the Scandinavian countries known to me, the most really Scandinavian is Norway. The experts, of course, tell one to go to Iceland. There one can really meet Njal with his house-tree still standing, and Thorgrim, and certainly Snorri Sturlason, and see some of the great heroines of saga (I trust, not all of them) striding out of the farm door with milk-bowls or ropes of dried fish in their hands. But meantime, until one knows Iceland, Norway is a very satisfactory substitute. I suppose, in the course of years, the Norse will probably become commercialized and industrialized like the rest of us; but the magic of the old peasant life, with its simplicity and dignity and quiet courage, has not died out of Norway yet.

I was twice told a story about a tour made by the present King in some remote district, where he spent the night with a farmer in one of the great lonely farms that have stayed in the same hands since the days of Harald Haarfager. Two tables were set out for dinner—a small one for the King and the farmer, another large one for the rest of the company. Some criticism seems to have been passed on this arrangement by the Royal suite, but the farmer was unmoved. "Naturally," he said to the King, "you and I sit together, and our servants sit together. My servants

are quite content to sit with yours, but it seems that some of yours do not like it. I cannot think why."

The reason why the Norwegians like us was explained to me by an experienced man. It is that they know us chiefly through our salmon-fishers, and in part through our literature. And we know them chiefly through rather similar channels, their literature and their fishermen and farmers. But even when these partial impressions are corrected, and our friends find that we are not all as salmon-fishers are, I think there will remain between us some deep race-affinity which shows itself in the cut of the cheek-bones, as well as our common tastes in the matter of outdoor life and sea-faring and personal liberty.

A few miles of sea between itself and Germany will do wonders for any nation's peace of mind. There is no such nervousness in the air of Norway as there is in Denmark. There is, of course, plenty of prudence, and quite rightly so. The Norwegian Government is bound to look after the safety of Norway, and does not feel strong enough to set about righting the wrongs of the world. The Government is strictly neutral, officials are neutral, even newspapers for the most part are extremely careful what they say. A young man who introduced me to the audience at a certain lecture in an excellent but severely neutral speech, hastened to assure me afterwards: "I had to be neutral, because, you see, I am president of this society." On another occasion I was introduced by a learned man in a speech so chillingly impartial that I assumed him to be a pro-German, and only found later that he was a Pacifist Socialist, to whom the Germans were practically lost souls for whom he had

nothing but pity, while we, though sinning, might still be redeemed by prayer and chastisement.

Political feeling in Norway is overwhelmingly Liberal and pro-English. The Socialists are probably stronger in the country than their representation in the Storting suggests (23 Socialists, 76 Liberals, and 24 Conservatives). But they handicapped themselves heavily in the last election by taking up the cause of Pacifism and Complete Disarmament, and the leaders seem still to maintain it in the face of increasing difficulties. "We can never resist Germany successfully, so why should we resist her at all?" This same political attitude exists in Denmark, where it seems rather more comprehensible. And, as asserted against a pro-British majority, it sometimes slips by inadvertence into something like pro-Germanism.

Such real pro-Germanism as exists seems to come from extreme disgruntled Conservatives, from some military men and people who are led by military experts to believe that Germany deserves to win, and from a small group of intellectuals. There are various reasons for the attitude of these last. The intellectuals in any country are apt to set themselves—quite rightly—to correct the main flood of popular feeling; and, being human after all, they generally go too far. Then we have to reckon, though to a less degree than in Sweden, with the immense influence of the German universities. All the various learned bodies in Scandinavia are more or less under the spell; not mainly, I venture to think, because German *Wissenschaft* is so inherently superior to that of England and France, but because it is so incomparably better organized, mobilized, and advertised.

There is also, as in Sweden and Denmark, some pro-Germanism among writers and artists. I should not like to say that successful Norwegian writers were systematically "nobbled" by Germany; but the German reading public does seem to be much more on the look-out for them, and the German authorities much readier to give them recognition. How many readers of the *Westminster* are familiar with the works, poetical and other, of Knut Hamsun? The bookshop windows of Christiania are all scowling with his portrait, far larger than life, and groaning with his newly collected works. And one clever young man told me—though more elderly critics smiled at this judgement—that he was perhaps the greatest Scandinavian writer who had ever existed. Now, I do not for a moment say that Knut Hamsun would be converted from his pro-Germanism if we all begun hurriedly to read his books and made him, say, an Honorary Doctor of Divinity. But at the same time, I cannot be surprised if he and various other writers should think a good deal better of the German public than of ours, and agree in condemning the "amazing ignorance" of our ruling class. I suppose the main reason for our lack of attention to foreign literature is the same as for our comparative ignorance of foreign languages: that our own is so large and fine, and carries us such a long way. But certainly, though, like the rest of the world, we have duly read our Ibsen and Björnsen—in translations—we have not done much to induce Norwegian writers to look west rather than south.

Yet, in spite of all, Norway does look west. She likes freedom of intellect, as well as other kinds of

freedom. She likes to keep some strength in reserve, and not live always at concert pitch. The knowledge of the English language in Norway is simply amazing; and the knowledge of English books remarkable. I have seldom noticed a better array of modern English law-books than I saw in the study of a certain Norwegian lawyer, a Conservative in politics. And I doubt if I have ever heard a more beautiful or more understanding exposition of the ideals of England and the work that England tries to do in the world than a certain short and unrecorded speech by Dr. Collin, the Professor of European Literature in Christiania.

Can Norwegian sympathy, genuine as it is, be translated into any form of effective help for the Allies? The question is difficult. At times it looks as if a state of war between Norway and Germany would make practically no difference to either party. The Germans are sinking Norwegian ships steadily and malignantly day by day, scarcely troubling any longer to invent any excuse or apology. They had sunk ninety-six[1] the last time I heard the figures. This is an injury so flagrant and monstrous, and so patently intended to punish Norway for her relations with us, that we need waste no words upon it. The situation it creates is almost unendurable, and looks as if in the course of time it must become absolutely so. There are two ways to put an end to it. Either Norway must agree to send no ships to sea (except perhaps down the coast and across the Baltic to Germany), or else she must declare war. The first course involves enormous loss and extreme humilia-

[1] By now I believe it is nearly 400. (Jan. 1918.)

tion. What would the second involve? Norway could not directly hurt Germany; she could only forbid all commercial intercourse with her, and allow our fleet the use of certain Norwegian harbours. On the other hand, Germany could not invade Norway; she could only devote a larger, but not much larger, proportion of her energy to sinking Norwegian ships. So far, the balance of advantage would seem to be rather in favour of Norway; but there remains the problem of the attitude of the two most powerful neutrals, the United States and Sweden. If at this eleventh hour the United States could give a decided lead, other neutrals might follow. If, on the other hand, Sweden made it clear that as soon as Norway declared war she would declare war on the other side, the deterrent would probably be conclusive. After all, it is surprising how long an apparently unendurable situation can be endured if the ways out of it are sufficiently disagreeable. President Wilson has taught us at least that. The wrongs of Norway are much greater than those of America, but so are her difficulties. And it looks as if the Germans would be allowed to go on sinking Norwegian shipping, while enjoying the benefits of peace with Norway, for an indefinite future, until either we and our Allies find a successful way of stopping her or there is no Norwegian shipping on the sea for her to sink.

Fortunately, up to the present, the Norwegians have built or bought during the war more ships than they have lost. But it certainly is a queer situation. riend of mine who wished to cross the was warned that his ship was likely determined to go to the fountain

head for information. He called on a certain German Consul in Norway, who was an old friend of his, and asked if there was any reason against sailing in the *Popinjay* (let us call it). And the Consul, after consulting his notes or his memory, was happy to answer, "No; no reason against sailing in the *Popinjay*!" It reminds one of the polite brigand in "Le Roi des Montagnes."

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